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TRAVEL FOR THE HANDICAPPED

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BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
BUSINESS, TRADE, AND TOURISM

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
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ON

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TRAVEL FOR THE HANDICAPPED

TUESDAY, MAY 22, 1984

U.S. SENATE,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON BUSINESS, TRADE, AND TOURISM,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:22 p.m., in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Larry Pressler (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Staff members assigned to this hearing: Charlie Faust, professional staff member, and John Hardy, minority staff counsel.

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR PRESSLER

Senator PRESSLER. We want to apologize for this delay, but we had a very difficult vote right there and I had to go over and lend my aid.

As we have said, we are here today to discuss travel opportunities for the handicapped. I will keep my opening remarks brief because we have a large number of witnesses to hear from today.

As I have stated in the preceding press conference, I believe that many of the problems that handicapped travelers encounter stem from social rather than physical barriers. I further believe that these problems can be solved at far less expense to the travel industry than many problems of physical access. The progress made by the Federal Government and the private sector in making facilities accessible to disabled persons is certainly significant, but it has, in my opinion, been overemphasized in relation to the social aspect.

After studying the testimony to be presented today, I am even more convinced that improvements in the exchange of information between the travel industry and the handicapped can dramatically improve travel conditions for the handicapped. Progress in communication will encourage more handicapped people to travel, and it will help the travel industry capitalize on a potential market estimated at over $30 billion per year.

My purpose in holding this hearing is to facilitate better communication between the industry and the handicapped community and, therefore, benefit both.

There are many kinds of disabilities, each presenting a unique set of travel barriers. We are only able to hear from a few representatives of the handicapped community today. Others are submitting statements for the hearing record, and for that we are very grateful. There are also many forms of travel and tourism, each

with different problems of physical access. Even within individual modes of travel there are great differences.

Urban areas, such as the Washington area, represent a completely different set of travel problems than do rural areas like my home State of South Dakota. I simply hope that this hearing will help increase awareness and understanding of the needs of the handicapped by all segments of the travel industry.

We will hear testimony from representatives of the Federal Government, the handicapped community, and the travel industry. We will begin with Dan McKinnon, who has been waiting patiently, Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board, whom I understand has delayed other commitments to appear before the subcommittee today.

Dan, you may come forward, and meanwhile I am going to read a statement from my distinguished colleague, Senator Daniel Inouye, who is participating in the briefing with Mr. Duarte, which I will participate in later, hopefully, today. This is Senator Daniel Inouye's statement:

OPENING STATEMENT BY SENATOR INOUYE

I wish to commend the distinguished chairman of the subcommittee for scheduling hearings on a matter I consider extremely important to our nation and to the world. I particularly wish to thank the chairman for including a witness from the American Psychological Association at my request. I also wish to express my regret that a meeting of the Senate Intelligence Committee prevents me from being there.

According to our source, tourism is the largest industry in the world, and hundreds of millions of people travel annually. Not too long ago, travel was the prerogative of a very few—the wealthy and the elite. Today, there are modes of transportation and types of accommodations to fit just about every pocketbook and suit every taste. Just as importantly, travel is no longer considered as frivolous, or something that is nice but not necessary. We are beginning to understand its therapeutic value, and its ability to contribute to understanding and goodwill among the people of the world.

Regarded in these terms, it is inconceivable to me that the benefits of travel and tourism should be unavailable to a person who, though handicapped, has the ability the travel.

I would hope that as a result of these hearings, everyone will have a better understanding of what is needed to make travel more physically and socially accessible to persons with disabilities.

This was a statement by Senator Inouye, which will be put in the record.

Now we will hear from Dan McKinnon, a good friend, Chairman of the Civil Aeronautics Board, who has been waiting patiently.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAN McKINNON, CHAIRMAN, CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD

Mr. MCKINNON. Mr. Chairman, it is good to be with you today. I have with me Hoyt Decker and Dave Schaffer from our staff, who have had considerable experience in the handicapped issues.

At the press conference—just before I gave you my formal statement—someone asked you: What do you expect to come out of this hearing? I would like to at least give you one thing right now.

Harold Snider, the president of the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, had mentioned that he had contacted the airlines, and none of the top 10 airlines had responded to his questions about what they are doing. Right now, I will have our staff get together with him, and I will personally send a letter to

the president of those airlines, and we will ask them to answer. I am sure that they will provide him the answer that he would like to have.

Senator PRESSLER. Good. That is a great spirit of cooperation.

Mr. MCKINNON. I would also like to recognize that this is obviously a very sensitive issue, and it is a very important subject. I am pleased to be here with you today to give you the Civil Aeronautics Board's views about transportation for handicapped air travelers.

The Board is committed to assuring that all persons have a reasonable opportunity to travel by air. Toward that end, the Board has issued a rule to prohibit discrimination against handicapped air travelers.

Among other things, this rule:

Strictly limits the situations where a handicapped person could be refused air transportation;

Requires airlines to permit blind passengers to bring their guide dogs or canes on board;

Requires airlines to help handicapped passengers get on and off the aircraft and move through the airport; and

Establishes reporting requirements and compliance procedures to monitor and enforce this antidiscrimination rule.

Our consumer assistance division frequently responds to complaints from handicapped travelers. They have often succeeded in resolving problems informally with airlines, using the Board's rule as leverage when necessary.

The Board and its staff have expended a great deal of effort to improve the situation for handicapped air travelers. But all this could end at the end of this year. As you know, at that time the CAB will "sunset" under the terms of the Airline Deregulation Act. Some of the Board's functions and rules will clearly transfer to other Government agencies, but for the Board's rules on the handicapped, the situation is different.

The Board's rule is based on two laws—section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and section 404(a) of the Federal Aviation Act.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act prohibits discrimination against handicapped persons by recipients of Federal financial assistance. In the area of aviation, only airlines that receive subsidies to serve small communities are covered.

This section is not affected by CAB sunset. It will continue at the Department of Transportation, the agency that will administer the Board's subsidy program. But it is only a few very small airlines that receive subsidies. None of the major airlines are covered by the Rehabilitation Act. They no longer receive Federal financial assistance.

It is only by keeping section 404(a) of the Federal Aviation Act that we can retain authority over all airlines to bar discrimination against handicapped persons. Section 404(a) requires airlines to provide "adequate service." We have reasoned that if service is denied to any group, such as the handicapped, it can hardly be considered "adequate."

As the Deregulation Act now stands, section 404(a) will effectively die at the end of this year. This should not be allowed to happen.

There is now a bill pending before the House that would continue section 404(a) and the Board's rules to protect handicapped air

travelers. That bill is H.R. 5297, the "Civil Aeronautics Board Sunset Act of 1984," commonly known as the Mineta bill. That bill would transfer 404(a) to the Department of Transportation, over to DOT. It would allow DOT to continue to enforce the Board's rules.

Mr. Chairman, I strongly urge you to support the Mineta bill. In addition to providing important protections for handicapped passengers, it would also continue many other consumer protections, such as those guaranteeing passengers a no-smoking seat, and those compensating passengers for lost luggage or for being bumped off a flight. This bill deserves your support.

I thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear today and explain the problems to the committee.

I will be glad to answer any questions that you might have.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much for coming here and for waiting so patiently.

In your testimony you have mentioned the CAB's consumer assistance division, which frequently responds to complaints by handicapped travelers. What problems seem to be the most prevalent among handicapped air travelers today, and how are they being addressed?

Mr. MCKINNON. Today, we have the problems that concern the wheelchair handicapped, as well as the blind and the deaf, and those persons needing oxygen. We had, in 1983, 71 complaints about travel by handicapped persons, and that is out of 9,000 complaints that we received, so it was less than 1 percent.

I think the most common thread of the complaints that we receive is the apparent need for improved employee training for dealing with disabled travelers. We haven't detected any problems on behalf of the airlines to create problems for handicapped persons, it is just a matter of training their personnel to be able to be of service to the handicapped, and assist them in their traveling.

I think, basically, the biggest problem is one of education of employees.

Senator PRESSLER. I appreciate your willingness to write notes to the various airlines and get together a little meeting, or at least ask them what is being done. I think that that will be very constructive. I think awareness is good, and you are in a key role to do that. So we appreciate that.

You mentioned the Board's ruling prohibiting discrimination against handicapped air travelers. Could you explain more fully to the committee the reporting requirements and enforcement aspects of this rule?

Mr. MCKINNON. Mr. Chairman, as you are well aware, under the Board's rule, carriers that get "Government subsidies" must file an employee manual that describes their policies for accommodating the handicapped. Then, if we see fit, we can ask for changes in those policies. That affects, basically, 53 carriers under the Essential Air Service Program, that receive those subsidies.

They had to file—we started this in June 1982—a year later, which would be June 1983, a self-evaluation of those policies and how they were working. They filed those and we reviewed them. That applies, basically, to the subsidy carriers which, once again, are the small ones.

If anybody does have a complaint, they can file it with the CAB. We investigate all of those complaints very carefully. We have never had a formal investigation because all of the complaints that we have received have been resolved through staff work with the airlines.

Senator PRESSLER. Do you have any information on how the United States compares with other countries in accommodating handicapped travelers?

Mr. MCKINNON. The one criteria that we had, Senator, of checking that out was to get a hold of IATA, which is the International Air Transport Association. Basically, it is composed of more foreign carriers than U.S. carriers, so their attitude was that U.S. carriers do as good a job, or maybe a little better than the world's airlines, but they weren't going to knock their own members.

My belief is that we are doing a better job in the United States than they are around the world. I primarily think so because of deregulation, because it creates competition, and the competitive forces make people want to work harder and forces the companies generally to provide better service. So I think deregulation, frankly, has been a factor that has helped to improve that.

Senator PRESSLER. Is there any way to estimate the total cost to the industry?

I know over the years, the Federal Government, through legislation or rulemaking, required forms of retrofitting and accommodations, some of which you have described, for the handicapped traveler. How cost effective has this been?

Mr. MCKINNON. Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of any specifics of the airlines, like taking rows of seats to make room for wheelchairs in the aisles. I know there was a law that required retrofitting of buses, and it was struck down in the courts as being to expensive. I think the same would be true of airlines, too.

How do you take out seats? If you take out a row of seats, that is going to do is raise the cost of travel to all of the other travelers because it is still going to cost them so much to fly the aircraft.

So I think you have to reach a compromise of some sort on how you get handicapped people helped aboard the aircraft. I think some of that part has been the practical aspects versus the sensitivity and the indignity of sometimes the wheelchair passenger on small aircraft being loaded aboard maybe by hand, rather than through special chairs. So there has been some trade-off there.

Right now, the CAB is part of a task force looking at ways to improve boarding chairs through the Architectural Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, that is working on that problem.

I think that there is really a sensitivity, as I detect, in the industry to try to serve the needs of the handicapped. The CAB, of course, passed a rule shortly after I got there to allow dogs and canes onboard the aircraft.

Senator PRESSLER. I know that it is impossible to have every type of service available everywhere. I know that you and I have often discussed the particular problems of air service in rural States like South Dakota. You have been very patient in meeting with my mayors and other groups who have come in. I thank you for that.

After learning of today's hearings, one of my constituents, Mr. Darrell Jepsen of Sioux Falls, SD, whose testimony will be part of

today's record, contacted me with a very insightful example of one of the problems he has encountered in this area in a particular case that we have discussed at great length.

Since losing major jet service between our largest city and our capital city, it has been completely impossible for persons confined to a wheelchair to fly. To what extent does the Board consider these types of problems in deciding cases like this, and how do you think we can best address this type of a problem?

Mr. McKINNON. I think that the best thing, first of all, for Mr. Jepsen is to make the CAB aware of these problems. I am not aware of any problems he may have had.

Sioux Falls to Pierre, as you were talking about, Mesala Airline is the only airline I know that flies between the two. They are flying Beech-99's, which are a very small aircraft. As you know, on the small aircraft, we require boarding not over the wings, but through a door either fore or aft of the wing.

We have part 398 of our rules that requires the aircraft to have access by stairs. I guess, if he has a specific problem, he should get in touch with us, and we will do everything we can to help resolve it with the airline and see what the problem is.

This is news to me, Senator. Tell him to get a hold of us, and we will work with him.

Senator PRESSLER. That is what we are about, bringing up some new problems today.

As you may have heard earlier today, one of the South Dakota witnesses here today, who is blind, was forced to use a wheelchair when leaving the plane at Minneapolis. This type of treatment was insensitive. What steps do you recommend that we take to sensitize the industry about these problems?

Mr. McKINNON. I think your hearings today, and the type of press that is going to result from it, will have a big impact. I think that if I can send some letters to these presidents asking them what they are doing, we will sensitize the top management, and of course everything starts at the top and trickles down.

I think that they will pass that along to their department heads, and then on down to the people who are out in the front ground, so to speak, dealing with the problems of the handicapped coming aboard an aircraft.

It is just a matter of sensitivity and education, it seems to me, Senator. I can't see any further legislation having any impact on this industry.

Senator PRESSLER. We may have some more written questions we will send you for the hearing record. We appreciate your cooperation, and we thank you for being here.

Mr. McKINNON. Thank you, Senator. It is always a pleasure to be in front of you.

[The following information was subsequently received for the record:]

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR INOUYE AND THE ANSWERS THERETO

Question. It has been suggested that there is a need for more research to identify the handicapped travel market in order to justify further expenditures by the travel industry.

Your agency, of course, does travel research. Do you believe it should undertake this research?

Answer. One of the USTTA's major missions under the National Tourism Policy Act is the gathering, analysis, and provision of timely data on international travel for use by the public and private sector tourism marketing and policy planners. Within the scope of this responsibility, and working through the Research Committee of the Travel and Tourism Board and the Tourism Policy Council, USTTA is able to respond to requests for international marketing information describing the handicapped travel market or is able to suggest research methodology that will provide this information.

Question. In your testimony you cite several examples to support your statement that there is a "Long Unfinished Agenda" with respect to equal access to tourism and recreation facilities for handicapped persons.

As the government agency responsible for promoting tourism, what specifically has USTTA done to shorten this agenda?

For example, with respect to travel and the handicapped, do you have any continuing liaison or do you work on a formal basis with: The Government's Architectural and Transportation Compliance Board; The FAA; The CAB; The ICC; The American Hotel and Motel Association; The Air Transport Association; The National Park Service; and Amtrak.

Answer. On page 17 of USTTA's testimony, specific USTTA activities relating to the handicapped travel market are cited. USTTA has a continuing dialogue with groups working on problems of travel for the handicapped.

USTTA has both formal and informal contracts with the agencies and associations mentioned. Problems with respect to travel for the handicapped can be raised formally through the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and the Tourism Policy Council. Informally, such problems and concerns can be dealt with on an individual request basis or through such forums as USTTA's recent seminar on travel for the handicapped.

Question. In your testimony you note that "solid progress has been made in the removal of barriers to handicapped travelers", and that much of this advance has been due to Federal legislation.

The CAB adopted regulations based on one such Act (Architectural Barriers Act). They ensure that handicapped persons receive adequate air transportation service without unjust discrimination.

Those regulations will, of course, expire at the end of the year when the CAB goes out of business. As I understand it, after that no agency will have authority to issue similar rules. In other words, it will be up to the market place to determine the nature and quality of the air transportation service handicapped persons will be offered.

a. In view of your statement that much of the progress in this area has been due to federal legislation, do you think it is a good idea to let the market place be the sole decision maker?

b. As the primary agency of government for travel promotion, do you believe USTTA has any responsibility in this area?

Answer. a. H.R. 5297, the "Civil Aeronautics Board Sunset Act of 1984" and other possible legislative initiatives this session of Congress may preserve the CAB rulemaking authority in this area. If this is the case, one means of helping preserve and protect the handicapped air traveler will continue.

b. No, I do not think it is a good idea to let the marketplace be the sole decision maker for travel for the handicapped. The private sector, along with government at all levels, local, state and federal, have responsibilities in this area. Furthermore, and more specifically, USTTA has a responsibility for involvement in governmental activity with respect to international travel promotion. USTTA is working with handicapped groups in the development and distribution abroad of a handicapped travel brochure. Over this past year USTTA formally endorsed and helped the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped obtain affiliate membership in the World Tourism Organization. USTTA will continue to work with all sectors of the travel industry to alleviate problems of travel by the handicapped.

Senator PRESSLER. Next I will call on a friend of the committee, the Under Secretary for Travel and Tourism for the U.S. Department of Commerce, Hon. Donna F. Tuttle, who we are very happy to have, and who is doing a great job in her post. We would like to hear your opening statement.

STATEMENT OF DONNA F. TUTTLE, UNDER SECRETARY OF COMMERCE FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM, DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Ms. TUTTLE. Thank you, Senator.

I appreciate this opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee on Business, Trade, and Tourism to testify on travel by handicapped persons. In the past decade, solid progress has been made in the reduction and removal of barriers to handicapped travelers. Much of this advance has been due to Federal legislation.

In 1968, Congress enacted the Architectural Barrier Act. This measure required that certain buildings and facilities designed, constructed, altered or leased using Federal funds after 1969 be made accessible to, and usable by, most physically handicapped persons. Since 1968, additional laws and regulations have served to remove major transportation barriers for those who are handicapped.

Research is being conducted to assist in the development of minimum guidelines and requirements for accessible design. The U.S. Department of Transportation has published a report on the transport needs of handicapped individuals, and on guidelines for removing barriers to existing transport systems.

The National Park Service published a guide describing special access facilities for handicapped persons.

A special tax deduction of up to $25,000 is available to private concerns, such as hotels and motels, that design or alter their facilities to make them barrier-free.

A number of travel agencies, such as those that are members of the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, either specialize in or offer tours for handicapped persons.

Despite these advances and despite growing public awareness, there is still a long unfinished agenda with respect to equal access to tourism and recreation facilities for handicapped persons.

The total number of Americans suffering from some form of disability is probably 68 million, or about 30 percent of the total population. Although the reliability of available data has been subject to question, the data we do have indicate that the number of our handicapped citizens is not decreasing, it is growing larger every year.

Only equal travel opportunity for handicapped persons can bring equal travel opportunity to other Americans, but that opportunity cannot exist so long as invisible barriers impede or discourage travel by the blind, the deaf, the lame, the sick, and the aged.

There are several possible ways of approaching this challenge. Additional legislation is an option. Self-regulation, the development of transport accessibility standards, the tightening of existing building accessibility standards, and further dialog and cooperation between handicapped users of travel services, the providers of those services, and manufacturers and contractors who produce travel-related facilities and equipment are other alternatives. Of the two basic approaches—mandatory or voluntary—I believe the latter, at least now, is the most viable and productive.

Inasmuch as there has been progress in the removal of barriers, I think that additional legislation and the creation of more bureauc-

racies would be premature. What is needed is full implementation of existing legislation and of standards already developed by the American National Standard Institute, plus a renewed commitment by the travel industry of freedom of access for handicapped persons.

USTTA has committed itself to improving travel opportunities for handicapped persons. We work closely with the organizations representing the handicapped. We have supported and assisted in the preparation and distribution of brochures addressing the special needs of the handicapped users of travel services.

We cosponsored, with the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, a 2-day seminar on these special needs. We have consulted with airline representatives on possible solutions to the special problems encountered by the handicapped as part of their air travel. We have fully informed our overseas offices about the special needs and services of the handicapped.

I serve as cochairman of the Travel for Tomorrow Council. One of its primary purposes is to promote the assurance of our individual mobility, particularly for groups such as the handicapped.

The voluntary approach should produce in time tourism which is accessible to a majority, if not all, of those who are handicapped. Should it not, then I would be among the first to suggest that we take a new look at the possibility of further legislation. But I do not think more legislation is necessary now.

I am convinced that the travel industry would be in the vanguard of efforts at reform.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much.

Let me begin by saying that I am glad to hear you say that you feel the most positive steps toward improving travel opportunities for the handicapped are voluntary measures rather than legislative ones, because I think at this point we have got to try to move forward on that front. Although, if we need new legislation, we certainly will have it.

I agree with your view. I feel that, on the one hand, certain legislation may be necessary but, on the other, I would prefer to see more information made available for handicapped travelers, and more voluntary measures by the travel and tourism industry aimed at capitalizing on the huge potential market that handicapped travelers represent.

I believe that the testimony to be presented this afternoon will confirm that representatives of both the handicapped community and the travel and tourism industry feel that problems relating to travel by the handicapped are as much problems of misinformation and misunderstanding, in other words, people problems, as anything else.

As I stated in my opening remarks, the purpose in holding this hearing is to facilitate the flow of information between the industry and the handicapped travelers, so that voluntary measures by the industry can be as beneficial to handicapped travelers as possible.

In that regard, I am very interested in the USTTA's involvement in printing and distributing brochures to inform handicapped people about travel opportunities. I assume that the USTTA, being an agency that focuses its operations on foreign travel markets,

makes this information available worldwide through its overseas offices.

What types of information do your overseas offices provide regarding travel opportunities for the handicapped in the United States; and do you have any staff here in the United States or at your overseas offices that specialize in gathering and distributing information relating to travel for the handicapped?

Ms. TUTTLE. As you know, we published a brochure quite a while ago, called "Travel Tips for the Handicapped," and that was provided to our overseas offices. Both our staff in Washington, and our staff in the regional offices, are very much aware of the Barriers to the Handicapped that exist in travel. As part of a continuous effort they answer questions about the accessibility of travel from tour operators, foreign tour operators, and travel agents in the individual markets.

We are looking forward to the publishing of the new brochure, and indeed intend to distribute that through our overseas offices. We feel that this will very much help to encourage travel by the handicapped.

Within our agency, people in both our marketing and policy offices presented the 2-day seminar, and I think that it was quite an education for them. The material that they have gathered and collected has been tremendous. So we do have, what I consider, people who are very knowledgeable about this area.

Senator PRESSLER. Have you had any discussions with officials of other agencies, such as the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Education, or the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped, about cooperative efforts to gather and distribute information relating to travel opportunities for the handicapped?

Ms. TUTTLE. We have. In fact, one of the people on my staff who has done a great deal of work in this respect, has a very close relationship with HHS. She has been continually discussing the kinds of cooperative efforts that we can make. I know that Dr. Snider is very much aware of this.

I have been impressed with programs at HHS that exist on a State level. There are State councils that have a great deal of information for the handicapped. Indeed, this is something that we feel is very important, the interchange between the different agencies.

Senator PRESSLER. During the afternoon, we will hear about many valuable programs providing information to handicapped travelers. One problem, however, is that there has never been a single unified source for this information. Several of our witnesses today are interested in creating a single data base which could provide information about handicapped access to all sectors of the travel and tourism industry.

I would like to know if you think this is a good idea, and if you have any suggestions as to how such a data base might be created and administered?

Ms. TUTTLE. Before I give you an answer as to whether it is or is not a good idea, it is something that I would like to study further. It sounds like a good idea. I think, though, the mechanism for carrying it out may be complex.

I think right now, as I said, that the States are very capable of handling this, and that is a good place to start. I am impressed by the State councils under the HHS and their handling of information.

I understand, too, within the Department of Education, the Architecture Compliance and Transport Board is also handling this.

It is certainly something, though, that we at USTTA could look into. As I said, we also have a great deal of information compiled from our 2-day seminar, but the distribution effort is what I think puzzles us a little bit. I think that it is probably something that we should look into more thoroughly.

Senator PRESSLER. To the best of your knowledge, how do our Federal and private efforts to accommodate handicapped travelers compare to programs conducted by other nations?

Ms. TUTTLE. I asked my staff that same question. Among the members of the World Tourism Organization, we are considered to be very knowledgeable, at least about the problems of the handicapped. We have been cited in terms of our recognition of the needs for better accessibility for the handicapped.

Senator PRESSLER. We thank you very much. You are in a unique role.

John, do you have any questions from the minority?

I have one question from Senator Inouye. It has been suggested that there is a need for the establishment of a computerized data base with a toll free number to give the handicapped traveler information about airports, hotels, destination, and sightseeing attractions.

Some years ago, I believe the Travel Service did have a multilingual nationwide information service with respect to tourism throughout the United States, Travelfone USA. That program was discontinued for lack of funds, although the cost to Travel Service was only about $250,000.

With your increased budget, would it be a good idea to reinstitute that program, and also include information for the handicapped traveler?

Ms. TUTTLE. I was not aware of the previous program that USTTA had. However, I know that private industry has started this themselves. The National Tour Association is compiling information on group tours for the handicapped and Greyhound Lines has a TDD/TTY number that you can call for information.

As you know, I said in my testimony that I was chairman of the Travel for Tomorrow Council, and this is something that we have brought up in our ads. We have ads dealing with the handicapped and accessibility, and there is an address that they can write to and get more information.

I think that this is something, too, that industry could become much more involved with, and certainly they could provide that kind of information for the traveler.

Mr. HARDY. I want to point out, Madam Secretary, that the Travelfone was a joint industry-Travel Service program.

Ms. TUTTLE. I understand that. I also think that this is something that I can certainly discuss with the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board, and with the Tourism Policy Council, where other agencies are represented.

Senator PRESSLER. I have several other questions from Senator Inouye who is necessarily absent, and with President Duarte. Let me ask one of his questions, and the rest I will put in the record.

Should your agency work with associations such as the American Psychological Association to address the psychosocial aspects of tourism and travel?

Ms. TUTTLE. Should they, or could they?

Senator PRESSLER. "Should" is Senator Inouye's question.

Ms. TUTTLE. This is something that I have discussed with some of the university professors. It is something that we would like to pursue further, the healthful aspect of travel. So it would be something that I could do.

Senator PRESSLER. My staff is telling me that I have to move along, so the rest of the questions we will ask for the record. We thank you very much.

Ms. TUTTLE. Thank you very much. I enjoyed being here.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF DONNA F. TUTTLE, UNDER SECRETARY FOR TRAVEL AND TOURISM, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

I appreciate this opportunity to appear before the Subcommittee on Business, Trade and Tourism to testify on travel by handicapped persons.

In the past decade, solid progress has been made in the reduction and removal of barriers to handicapped travelers. Much of this advance has been due to Federal legislation. In 1968, Congress enacted the Architectural Barriers Act. This measure required certain buildings and facilities designed, constructed, altered or leased with Federal funds after 1969 to be accessible to, and usable by, most physically handicapped persons.

Under the Act, implementing guidelines were to be developed by the General Services Administration, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Defense and the U.S. Postal Service. Guidelines, based on standards developed by the American National Standards Institute, were subsequently issued, but tended to vary from agency to agency, according to intended use.

Passage of the Architectural Barriers Act was followed in 1973 by enactment of the Rehabilitation Act which, among other things:

Prohibited discrimination against qualified, handicapped persons participating in federally-assisted programs, and

Required that a sufficient number of buildings or parts of buildings be made accessible so that handicapped persons can participate in activities supported by Federal funds.

Guidelines subsequently issued to implement the Rehabilitation Act do not generally apply to privately-owned residences or buildings not designed, constructed or altered with Federal funds. For example, a hotel would be covered by the Act and its implementing regulations, only if located in an airport complex financed in part with Federal funds.

In 1978, the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services and Developmental Disabilities Amendments were enacted, amending the 1973 Act to require minimum guidelines for accessible design. As a result, uniform Federal accessibility standards are now under development. These will apply only to Federally-funded construction, but would cover such travel-related facilities as Department of Transportation-funded rapid rail facilities.

Regulations based on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act were issued on December 12, 1982, by the Civil Aeronautics Board to ensure that handicapped persons receive adequate air transportation service without unjust discrimination. These regulations prohibit all certified air carriers from excluding qualified handicapped persons from the benefits of air transportation.

Additionally, the regulations require all air carriers receiving a Federal subsidy to:

Make their aircraft reasonably accessible to handicapped persons with mobility impairments;

Ensure that sight-and-hearing-impaired persons have timely access to important information, including reports on flight delays, schedule or gate changes;

Allow sight-and-hearing impaired to be accompanied on aircraft by guide dogs on all flights on interstate and overseas air transportation (This regulation would not apply in cases in which admissibility of dogs is prohibited by the host government);

Permit passengers using canes or crutches to keep those aids near them;

Make reasonable efforts to permit handicapped persons to take folding wheelchairs aboard and to stow them in the passenger compartment;

Accept as baggage battery-powered wheelchairs and personal oxygen supplies of handicapped passengers.

Subject to advance notice, the regulations also require federally-subsidized air carriers to ensure availability of:

Medical oxygen for on-board use,

Assistance in boarding and deplaning, and

Personnel and equipment to assi t in handling baggage and making flight connections.

In addition, such carriers are required to "make reasonable efforts" to assist handicapped passengers in moving to and from restrooms aboard aircraft.

Aircraft designers are beginning to take the needs of handicapped persons into consideration. Boeing 767s are now being manufactured with movable arm rests on some aisle seats to make entry and egress easier for the disabled passenger. An onboard wheelchair, called "stow-away", which is for the use of disabled passengers, is now standard equipment on 767s.

Transports modes other than airlines also have achieved transit buses and sightseeing vehicles are not fitted with wheelchair lifts. Some subway systems, such as Washington, D.C.'s METRO, offer special access elevators for those who are physically unable to negotiate escalators or stairs. AMTRAK has wheelchair accessible toilets and some AMTRAK food service cars contain a special seat for handicapped persons. Not all trains are equipped with such cars, however. At least one of the national car rentals companies provides cars with hand controls at some outlets.

Enforcement of the Architectural Barriers Act has led to the construction of ramps for wheelchairs and wheelchair accessible drinking fountains and restroom facilities at many public buildings, museums and national monuments.

Research is being conducted to assist the development of minimum guidelines and requirements for accessible design. The U.S. Department of Transportation has published a Report on the Transport Needs of Handicapped Individuals and on Guidelines for Removing Barriers to Existing Transport Systems.

The National Park Service publishes a guide describing special access facilities for handicapped persons.

A special tax deduction of up to $25,000 is available to private concerns, such as hotels and motels, which design or alter their facilities to make them barrier-free. Today, most major hotel and motel chains publish directories that give the locations of those of their properties which offer special facilities—such as lift bars over beds, grab bars beside bathroom fixtures, wide entrance doors and "drive-under" sinks—for handicapped travelers.

A National Technical Assistance Network has been established by the National Center for a Barrier-Free Environment, an organization co-founded by the American Institute of Architects, the American Society of Interior Design, and eight organizations representing or serving handicapped persons. The Network consists of persons and organizations capable of providing technical assistance in the areas of barrier-free design and physical accessiblity. It includes designers, manufacturers, contractors, code officials—people responsible for the interpretation or enforcement of Federal, state of local building codes—service providers and consumers.

At least one hotel held inhouse, staff training sessions after it booked a large meeting to be attended by delegates with a particular disability. Guidelines for meeting planners are now available on criteria necessary for "Barrier Free Meetings". The guidelines include such considerations as the width of sleeping-and-bath room entrance doors and the placement of electrical outlets and towel racks.

A number of travel agencies, such as those which are members of the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, either specialize in, or offer, tours for handicapped persons.

Moses Rehabilitation Hospital in Philadelphia has established a travel information center which issues information on accessible hotels, attractions, restaurants and modes of transportation,

Through the Theatre Development Fund's Theatre Access Project, special services at a select number of New York theaters, music and dance events are made available for hearing, visually and physically impaired persons. These include:

A summary of plays in either regular or large type, mailed with tickets;

Accessibility information on Broadway and off-Broadway theatres;

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Some sign-interpreted performances;

A tape cassette sent with tickets containing a description of stage sets; and

A special telephone hotline with information on available shows for persons with visual impairment.

Despite these advances, there is still a long unfinished agenda with respect to equal access to tourism and recreation facilities for handicapped persons. Advances have been made in equality of access to travel opportunities for those who are handicapped or ill. But these advances have not always kept pace with gains in other forms of equality.

As of December, 1983, the Architectual and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board had received 944 written complaints about barriers since it was established, and 822 had yet to be resolved. One-hundred-and-twenty-eight of those complaints were received last year alone. The most common complaints were about lack of curb cuts, ramps and automatic doors. Facilities in New York State, Washington, D.C., and California were the object of the majority—about 36%—of all complaints last year.

Few restaurant menus are printed in braile. Few waiters and waitresses have been trained to tell blind patrons the location on the table of food items, for example, in terms of "12 o'clock".

Rental cars with hand controls are not available in all of our major cities.

The only commercial aircraft with wheelchair accessible restrooms are the new-generation Boeing 767s and Airbus Industries' A-300. Few airlines will transport wheelchairs powered by wet-cell batteries.

The State of Hawaii required a 120-day quarantine for all dogs entering the state, including guide dogs.

Many passengers who are sight-impaired may have special problems in coping with airport security devices and in comprehending in-flight demonstrations of safety features and survival equipment such as life vests, oxygen masks and emergency exits.

Policies and practices for accommodating handicapped passengers and not uniform. At least one truck airline and some intrastate carriers will not transport wheelchairs. Treatment of the handicapped traveler often varies from airport to airport, even on the same airline and even if the carrier's corporate policy prohibits discrimination against disabled persons. Even the most fair and equitable policy does not always filter down to the operating level, and when it does, it isn't always uniformly administered and executed. One major U.S. carrier went so far as to produce a training film to instruct its employees in the application of its policy toward the handicapped travelers, and the policy was to accommodate the disabled passenger to the maximum extent possible. Yet, a handicapped passenger attempting to deplane from one of the carrier's aircraft at Dulles International Airport was informed by an airline employee that wheelchairs were not permitted aboard mobile lounges. The passenger waited in the aircraft for more than an hour after other passengers had deplaned before finally being assisted to the terminal.

Even though the addition of onboard wheelchairs to 767s represents a significant breakthrough for the handicapped passenger, there is no existing standards, Federal or otherwise, which requires such wheelchairs to be equipped with a seat belt.

Similar dificiencies exist in non-transport facilities designed for the disabled traveler. An official of the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board, himself a handicapped person, recently described some which he encountered in traveling cross-country to assume his new post in Washington. He used a directory put out by a major U.S. motel chain which has made a conscientious effort to provide necessary facilities for handicapped persons. At one motel described in the directory as "accessible", and where he stopped for the night, there was an extra-wide bathroom door, permitting the entry of a wheelchair, and grab bars around the bathtub. Yet, there was also a grab bar completely around the toilet—which prevented access by wheelchair.

According to the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, wheelchair access motor coaches are in short supply and several dozen are needed immediately, nationwide.

The celebrated Israeli violinist Itzhak Perlman, partially paralyzed by polio, estimates that architectural barriers still deny 30 to 50 million handicapped Americans the right to enjoy the arts, a common reason for travel.

Many barriers which impede travel by handicapped persons are most resistant to change in the less-expensive transport modes:

At many train stations and bus terminals, wheelchairs are not routinely available, as they are at airports, to transport the physically-disabled from the ticket counter to the boarding platform, or from the platform to the curb;

Restrooms on interstate buses are generally not wheelchair accessible, nor are train or subway station turnstiles;

Arrival and departure announcements and "all-aboard" calls cannot always be communicated in a timely fashion to rail passengers suffering from a hearing disorder.

State governments have taken steps to expand travel and tourism opportunities for handicapped persons, and nearly every state has a "barriers" law requiring public spaces to be accessible. However, some handicapped individuals report that application and enforcement of the law often differ from state to state and even from locale to locale within a state.

The American National Standard Institute has developed design standards to ensure accessibility to buildings, but there are no similar standards defining "accessibility" in transportation.

These and similar problems affect large numbers of Americans. Although the reliability of available data has been subject to question, the data we do have indicate that the number of our handicapped citizens is not decreasing; it's growing larger every year. Today, there are more individuals with "activity limitation" than ever before. The National Health Interview Survey shows roughly 32 million such persons. More than half of these persons suffer from arthritis and rheumatism. Almost as many suffer from heart conditions and hypertension. More than 2.7 million Americans must walk with the aid of a cane. Roughly 1.4 million wear some form of brace. Close to three-quarters of a million of our citizens use a walker; the same number, a wheelchair. Almost a quarter of a million wear an artificial leg or foot. More than 25 million Americans are 65 or older. About 2.2 million veterans are disabled.

Surveys taken by the Social Security Administration indicate that four percent of the population is mentally-retarded and at least five percent, mentally-ill. At least six percent is blind or visually impaired. Some two percent suffers from a communication disorder (hearing-impaired, deaf, and/or speech-impaired), and roughly three percent from a neurological disorder such as epilepsy or multiple sclerosis.

The total number of Americans suffering from some form of disability is probably at least 68 million, or about 30% of the total population.

These figures have significance beyond the obvious. They tell us that a large percentage of our population cannot participate in normal travel or recreational activities without special equipment or assistance. For example, a sight-impaired person may not be able to enjoy an art gallery or a museum except with the aid of a tape-recorded lecture or unless he is permitted to examine the displays from a closer vantage point than fully sighted individuals. He cannot order a meal in a restaurant unless the menu is in braile or printed in large type, or unless he is accompanied by a fully sighted person or assisted by a waiter. When such a person is a foreign visitor whose native language is not English, the problem is compounded.

A deaf person may derive little knowledge from a sightseeing tour unless he is provided a written copy of the tour escort's script—or the escort delivers his lecture in sign language.

A person who must use a wheelchair can visit national shrines and historic sites only if elevators and special ramps are available.

Ill, but not permanently-handicapped, individuals may require special equipment or assistance in order to travel for health-related reasons. Often, such individuals seek treatment at spas, religious shrines or medical clinics. Others, including those with allergies or emphysema, may travel for a change of climate, or simply to find restful and relaxing surroundings. They may need to transport respiratory devices or other fragile equipment. They may require no-salt, low-fat or other special meals en route. Their access to travel-related services depends on how well the travel industry responds to these needs.

These facts have a tragic corollary: as long as handicapped persons lack full access to travel and recreation, their families, in many instances, will lack that right as well. Lack of access to travel sets off a chain reaction of pre-empted travel opportunities. Limited travel opportunities for handicapped heads of families, for example, can result in limited travel—and educational—opportunities for their spouses and children. The effects of disability, combined with inadequate travel services for the disabled, do not stop with one generation. They are passed on and on and on.

They affect the able-bodied as well as those who are handicapped. A wife, husband or child who shares the companionship of an individual who lacks full access to travel does not have unlimited options. His first obligation is to his mate, child or parent, and this obligation tends to influence his choice of free-time activity.

Only equal travel opportunity for handicapped persons can bring equal travel opportunity to other Americans. But that opportunity cannot exist so long as "invisible" barriers impede or discourage travel by the sight-and-hearing-impaired, the lame, the sick and the aged.

There are several possible ways of approaching this challenge. Additional legislation is an option. Self-regulation, the development of transport accessibility standards, the tightening of existing building accessibility standards, and further dialogue and cooperation between handicapped users of travel services, the providers of those services and manufacturers contractors who produce travel-related facilities and equipment and other alternatives. Of the two basic approaches—mandatory or voluntary—I believe the latter, at least now, is the most viable and productive.

Federal legislation can be effective only if there is a staff of Federal implementers to monitor progress and impose sanctions for noncompliance. Inasmuch as there has been progress toward removal of barriers, I think that additional legislation and the creation of more bureaucracies would be premature. What is needed is full implementation of existing legislation and of standards already developed by the American National Standard Institute, plus a renewed commitment by the travel industry of freedom of access for handicapped persons.

I think we might encourage voluntary measures such as:

Refresher courses for transport company personnel, aircraft cabin crews, train conductors, ticket agents and others who serve the handicapped traveler;

Sensitivity training for waiters, waitresses, maitre d's, bell hops and hotel front desk personnel;

Appointment of technically-qualified handicapped individuals to the boards of directors of airline, motor coach and hotel corporations; and

Membership in the National Center for a Barrier Free Environment for aircraft designers, architects who specialize in hotel and restaurant design, and travel industry trade associations.

USTTA has committed itself to improving travel opportunities for handicapped persons. We work closely with the organizations representing the handicapped. We have supported and assisted in the preparation and distribution of brochures addressing the special needs of the handicapped users of travel services. We co-sponsored, with the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, a two-day seminar on these special needs. We have consulted with airline representatives on possible solutions to the special problems encountered by the handicapped as part of their air travel. We have fully informed our overseas offices about the special needs and services of the handicapped. I serve as Co-Chairperson on the Travel for Tomorrow Council. One of its primary purposes is to promote the assurance of our individual mobility, particularly for groups such as the handicapped.

The special needs of handicapped persons should be taken into account during the design stage by manufacturers in consultation with persons who are handicapped. Progress can be made if those major trade associations which have not already done so will appoint advisory committees of handicapped individuals or establish joint study groups to examine accessibility problems. Such an approach should produce, in time, a tourism product which is accessible to a majority, if not all, of those who are handicapped. Should it not, then I would be among the first to suggest that we take a new look at the possibility of further legislation. But I do not think more legislation is necessary now.

I believe that most travel industry executives and, in fact, all Americans want handicapped persons to be able to share the benefits of travel, and I am convinced that once they fully comprehend the nature of the constraints and barriers which deter the handicapped traveler—and the questions of equity and justice which these barriers pose—travel industry executives will be in the vanguard of efforts at reform.

[The following information was subsequently received for the record:]

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR INOUYE AND THE ANSWERS THERETO

Question. It has been suggested that there is a need for more research to identify the handicapped travel market in order to justify further expenditures by the travel industry.

Your agency, of course, does travel research. Do you believe it should undertake this research?

Answer. One of the USTTA's major missions under the National Tourism Policy Act is the gathering, analysis, and provision of timely data on international travel

for use by the public and private sector tourism marketing and policy planners. Within the scope of this responsibility, and working through the Research Committee of the Travel and Tourism Board and the Tourism Policy Council, USTTA is able to respond to requests for international marketing information describing the handicapped travel market or is able to suggest research methodology that will provide this information.

Question. In your testimony you cite several examples to support your statement that there is a "Long Unfinished Agenda" with respect to equal access to tourism and recreation facilities for handicapped persons.

As the government agency responsible for promoting tourism, what specifically has USTTA done to shorten this agenda?

For example, with respect to travel and the handicapped, do you have any continuing liaison or do you work on a formal basis with:

The Government's Architectural and Transportation Compliance Board;
The FAA;
The CAB;
The ICC;
The American Hotel and Motel Association;
The Air Transport Association;
The National Park Service; and
Amtrak.

Answer. In your testimony, specific USTTA activities relating to the handicapped travel market are cited. USTTA has a continuing dialogue with groups working on problems of travel for the handicapped.

USTTA has both formal and informal contacts with the agencies and associations mentioned. Problems with respect to travel for the handicapped can be raised formally through the Travel and Tourism Advisory Board and the Tourism Policy Council. Informally, such problems and concerns can be dealt with on an individual request basis or through such forums as USTTA's recent seminar on travel for the handicapped.

Question. In your testimony you note that "solid progress has been made in the removal of barriers to handicapped travelers", and that much of this advance has been due to Federal legislation.

The CAB adopted regulations based on one such Act (Architectural Barriers Act). They ensure that handicapped persons receive adequate air transportation service without unjust discrimination.

Those regulations will, of course, expire at the end of the year when the CAB goes out of business. As I understand it, after that no agency will have authority to issue similar rules. In other words, it will be up to the market place to determine the nature and quality of the air transportation service handicapped persons will be offered.

In view of your statement that much of the progress in this area has been due to federal legislation, do you think it is a good idea to let the market place be the sole decision maker?

As the primary agency of government for travel promotion, do you believe USTTA has any responsibility in this area?

Answer. Part One. H.R. 5297, the "Civil Aeronautics Board Sunset Act of 1984" and other possible legislative initiatives this session of Congress may preserve the CAB rule-making authority in this area. If this is the case, one means of helping preserve and protect the handicapped air traveler will continue.

Part Two. No, I do not think it is a good idea to let the marketplace be the sole decision maker for travel for the handicapped. The private sector, along with government at all levels, local, state and federal, have responsibilities in this area. Furthermore, and more specifically, USTTA has a responsibility for involvement in governmental activity with respect to international travel promotion. USTTA is working with handicapped groups in the development and distribution abroad of a handicapped travel brochure. Over this past year USTTA formally endorsed and helped the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped obtain affiliate membership in the World Tourism Organization. USTTA will continue to work with all sectors of the travel industry to alleviate problems of travel by the handicapped.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE,
Washington, DC, June 29, 1984.

Hon. LARRY PRESSLER,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR PRESSLER: I have reviewed the full handicapped hearing transcript, and I would like to have the opportunity to add further remarks addressing questions that came up after my testimony. It would be appreciated if these comments can be included as part of the official record.

First, I would like to address your comment, in response to Mr. Gashel's testimony, that USTTA's position is that everything should be left to the private sector. In no way did I intend to imply that USTTA should not play a role in facilitating travel for the handicapped. However, I believe that our role should be catalytic in nature and that private sector involvement is important. Obviously, USTTA cannot finance retrofitting projects to ensure accessibility, nor can we ensure that all travel industry service personnel are sensitized to the requirements of handicapped travelers—this must be done by industry and local governments. But USTTA can and has co-sponsored a seminar on travel by the handicapped to increase awareness on the part of industry of the needs and problems of handicapped travelers.

Similarly, we have funded the revision of our "Travel Tips for the Handicapped" brochure. This brochure was part of a series developed for domestic use in 1977. The revised edition entitled "The United States Welcomes Handicapped Visitors" is a greatly expanded brochure and is restructured to accommodate the information needs of international travelers. As you know, Greyhound has offered to fund printing of the brochure; it will be distributed to prospective travelers through the USTTA international consumer information centers.

I believe USTTA can and does play a major role in developing an awareness of the needs and rights of handicapped travelers. For example, in December USTTA endorsed the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped (SATH) for membership as an "affiliate member" in the World Tourism Organization. USTTA will participate and present necessary credentials in SATH's behalf when this matter is brought to a vote at the WTO General Assembly in 1985. We support this strongly and believe that this is an appropriate forum to bring attention to handicapped travelers on an international basis.

USTTA's Tourism Policy Council has included on the agenda for their next meeting a discussion of the Department of Transportation's proposed rules concerning the air travel rights of the handicapped. Through the Council we will assure that the needs of handicapped travelers are considered when Government policies are established or programs are implemented.

Our USTTA staff, though not formally trained, has been sensitized to the needs of handicapped travelers, and does respond to requests on a continuous basis. USTTA collects and disseminates handicapped traveler information in the same way that we handle general information. In instances where specific information is not readily available, we do call upon other knowledgeable sources, such as SATH, for various traveler information requirements.

I would like to reiterate that I strongly believe that Government has the responsibility to ensure that the handicapped traveler experiences ease of mobility and can enjoy the benefits of travel and tourism. If problems do arise, Government can be the appropriate vehicle to coordinate, mediate, and resolve those problems. And, with private sector involvement in adapting services we can develop a receptive travel climate for the handicapped. I also believe that Government should initiate cooperative public/private sector activities and encourage information forums to focus attention on the handicapped traveler. I believe by working together we can achieve our goal.

Sincerely,

DONNA TUTTLE,
Under Secretary for Travel and Tourism.

Senator PRESSLER. I shall next call on Larry K. Volin, Acting Director of Communications, the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.

My staff tells me that some people have a 5 o'clock plane, so I am going to have to ask witnesses to summarize, we are going to place their full testimony in the record. But as always on Capitol Hill, we seem to not have enough time to cover the important sub-

jects, although we will cover the essence of it, certainly. We will get it into the record where Senators may read it.

Larry, we welcome you here. We appreciate the important work that you are doing.

STATEMENT OF LARRY K. VOLIN, ACTING DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED

Mr. VOLIN. Thank you very much, Senator.

Ladies and gentlemen, I am Larry K. Volin, Acting Director of Communications for the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.

The mission of the President's committee primarily is to build an attitude of acceptance for disabled persons in the work force. We recognize that we cannot do that and not be concerned with travel for disabled individuals who are on the job. After all, today, travel is the hallmark of somebody on the way up.

We believe that disabled people do have the ability and the freedom to go where they want, when they want, and use the many modes of transportation.

In summary, there are three reasons for this. First, as has been discussed at length by the two witnesses prior to me, the national effort which has removed architectural and many environmental barriers has opened up travel opportunities. Changes of attitude, while they are coming slowly, are still coming. The recognition of the travel industry—I am pleased to learn that it is a significant boost—that the disabled people are a market.

But I think we have to recognize that there are some things that need doing.

I agree with Mrs. Tuttle that we do need training. I agree with Mr. McKinnon, who preceded her, that we need training of airline staffs, personnel not only in the cabin and in the cockpit, but on the ground as well, to prevent some of these horror stories from occurring.

I think that something else is very, very important. And that is the dialog between the airline industry, the travel industry, travel agents, the hotel industry, the food service industry and disabled individuals.

I think that in the building of new hotels, remodeling of hotels, building of new airports, we must build in accessibility. Don't look at it as an afterthought.

Something else very important. Disabled people travel to meetings. They travel to conventions. I think our meeting planners, and our convention planners have got to be cognizant of the needs of disabled individuals. We can't say, "well, just because they won't come, we are not going to do it." If disabled travelers represent a $30 billion market, I think that anybody who says that we are not going to be concerned with their needs is very, very shortsighted.

I will submit to questions, Senator.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much.

You mention in your testimony that a great deal of progress has been made in making travel facilities and accommodations accessible to the handicapped. The first two suggestions in your testimony

deal with awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled travelers.

You suggest training programs for airline, railroad, hotel, convention, and auto rental employees to help them understand the needs of handicapped travelers. You also recommend that the travel industry maintain a dialog with groups representing the handicapped to learn new ways of enhancing the quality of life for the handicapped.

Do many segments of the travel industry actively engage in these awareness programs now, and does the President's committee involve itself in this area?

Mr. VOLIN. Let's take the first part of that question. We think that the airline industry, for example, as we have heard, is doing a pretty good job in building awareness of staff of the needs of handicapped travelers.

Hotel staffs, I can cite one example locally, the Washington Hilton, where we have our annual meeting every year, certainly they have done a great deal to sensitize and to train their staff not only in the convention and banquet departments, but in the front desk area, too.

As to the other part of the question, we haven't been that active in the area of travel, but some of the suggestions that were made today, particularly the new brochure which Harold Snider's organization is involved in, which the USTTA is producing, we would like to have copies to help promote and distribute. We can do a pretty good job with that throughout network, for example.

Senator PRESSLER. I would like to learn more about the functions of the President's committee. In your testimony, you mentioned that about 4,000 people attend your annual meeting. What topics do you discuss at the annual meeting, and what kinds of actions are subsequently taken?

How closely do you work with the State Governors' committees on employment of the handicapped?

Mr. VOLIN. The annual meeting brings together people to exchange ideas, to learn of new developments, new viewpoints, new programs. At the recent annual meeting, we covered new developments in technology for adapting the workplace.

We used this meeting as a forum to talk about projects with industry. These are projects where various industries, for example, electronics, work with rehabilitation agencies to train and subsequently place disabled individuals.

We had 17 or 18 panels, and we can certainly get you a list of the program which will give you that in complete detail, if you wish.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you.

Mr. VOLIN. If you would like a copy of the program, we will send it to you.

Senator PRESSLER. I would appreciate that very much. I may well drop in on some of your meetings next year, if I could.

Mr. VOLIN. We hope you do, sir.

Senator PRESSLER. Good.

Mr. VOLIN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator PRESSLER. John, does the minority have questions?

The minority will have some questions for the record.

Mr. VOLIN. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF LARRY K. VOLIN, ACTING DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS, PRESIDENT'S COMMITTEE ON EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED

I am Larry K. Volin, Acting Director of Communications of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped.

Our mission is to build and maintain an attitude of acceptance for disabled persons in the work force.

If we are to encourage upward mobility of disabled workers, as we do, it is essential that they be able to travel as part of their employment. Today, travel is the hallmark—and a key ingredient—of the work performed by the person on the way up.

Therefore we are deeply concerned with the ability of disabled people to travel as part of their work, across town, or across the country, or across an ocean. And we commend the Senate Commerce Subcomittee on Science, Technology and Space for holding this hearing. Certainly we are happy to participate.

We believe that disabled persons have the freedom to go where they want, when they want and they may do so by many modes of travel. There are three factors which account for this freedom. They are:

1. The national effort which has removed architectural and environmental barriers, thus opening up travel for disabled persons;

2. A change of attitudes which is leading to greater acceptance of disabled individuals as full partners in community life.

3. Recognition in the travel industry, the hotel industry and allied industries that disabled persons are people and are also paying customers. Thus they are a public—or a market—to be cultivated.

Let me discuss each of these reasons—accessibility first.

Today most airports in both large and small communities are accessible. They have doors that open automatically which say "come in," "welcome aboard," if you will.

As new air terminals are built, such as in San Francisco, Seattle, Kansas City, Lincoln, Nebraska and others, attention was paid to the needs of the traveler who may have an ambulatory disability, who may be blind or deaf. Ticket counters are designed and located so as to expedite their movement. That's also true of the jetways which make it easy for disabled people to board planes under their own steam even if they must use a wheelchair.

Facilities such as restrooms, drinking fountains, elevators and telephones are designed to accommodate disabled travelers. And, it is possible for disabled travelers to drive their own automobiles to the airport to park close to the terminal.

The airlines have taken measures to make the skies friendly to travelers who are disabled. Most carriers who are leaders in the field of carrying disabled passengers train ground, cabin and cockpit personnel to assist disabled travelers. According to the information we receive, this training is given on a regular basis as a refresher.

Anyone who travels knows that airlines board disabled persons, who request it, in advance of other passengers.

If a disabled person requests it, and depending on availability, he or she can get an assigned seat providing extra room.

If a disabled person needs or requests assistance in getting from the entrance to the airport, to the departure gate, that assistance is available.

And some of the new jets which airlines are putting into service today have features which accommodate people with disabilities.

This is the case with the Boeing 767. One lavatory has been designed so that a traveler who uses a wheelchair can get into the lavatory along with another person to assist him/her.

Also some of the new generation of airplanes have removable arm rests on the aisle seats. This makes it much easier for disabled travelers who use wheelchairs to transfer from a wheelchair to a seat.

Today, some airlines make provision for transporting battery-powered wheelchairs.

Another development concerns accessibility of Amtrak trains.

Train platforms at Union Station in Philadelphia; Newark, N.J. and New York City are raised to the height of the floor of the railroad car to permit an individual, who uses a wheelchair, for example, to toll from the platform right onto the train.

We might point out that Amtrak and airline reservation offices are accessible to deaf people through TTY's special telephones which print out communication from deaf callers on a screen similar to the digital read-out on a calculator.

Accessibility has enhanced travel along our highways—particularly interstate and toll roads—for disabled motorists. All rest stops are accessible on the interstate system. So are the food service facilities. And, thanks to efforts led by State Governors' Committees on Employment of the Handicapped, rest areas on many State highways are accessible to disabled motorists.

Moreover, Governors' Committees spearheaded efforts for accessible parking on city streets and shopping centers for disabled motorists. These committees led campaigns to put curb cuts in sidewalks. Certainly these improvements enhance freedom of movement for persons with ambulatory disabilities.

Three major rental car companies—Hertz, Avis and National—offer hand-controlled automobiles to mobility-impaired customers. These cars, like the ones rented by non-disabled persons, must be reserved in advance.

Today accessibility seems to be the byword in local transportation systems.

Here in Washington, D.C., in Baltimore and in San Francisco and in Atlanta, new subway systems are accessible to people with ambulatory impairments. In New York City, with an existing subway system, there are plans to make many of the stations accessible to disabled persons.

Many of the buses which run on fixed routes in many cities have wheelchair lifts which make a number of surface transit routes accessible to people who use wheelchairs.

I want to turn now to the hotel industry. Accessible sleeping rooms, meeting facilities and dining and wining facilities have contributed much to the capability of this freedom of the disabled traveler to go about the country on business or for enjoyment.

Major chains such as Hilton, Sheraton, Holiday Inn, to name a few, have a certain number of rooms which are accessible to guests who use wheelchairs. These accessible rooms have wider bathroom doors so a person can roll into the bathroom. Facilities in the bathroom are arranged so a person in a wheelchair can use them. Furniture in the guest room is arranged so that it won't impede the movement of the guest.

Safety of the guest, including the disabled guest, is also a paramount concern to hotel management and staff.

As all of us are aware, the hotel industry is paying greater attention to protecting guests from fire. All of us have read the literature placed in just about every hotel room which gives instructions on what to do in case of fire.

The President's Committee holds an Annual Meeting which brings approximately 4,000 employers, labor leaders, disabled persons and leaders in rehabilitation and placement to Washington. We are proud of the fact that nearly half of the participants are disabled persons. Quite naturally, we and the Washington Hilton Hotel, which houses the meeting, are concerned for the safety of all attendees. So, we worked with the hotel on a safety plan. Under the plan, people are asked if they'll need assistance in evacuating sleeping rooms should that become necessary. A roster of those needing assistance is developed by name, disability and room number. This roster is under the control of the assistant manager on duty. Should an emergency arise, the assistant manager on duty, can tell the emergency service responding to the call whether any disabled people need evacuation assistance if that is required.

Prior to our meeting, the hotel writes letters to the police and fire departments notifying them of the Annual Meeting and that there may be people who will need evacuation assistance in case of emergency.

To help the hotel in this area, we ask people who are disabled to indicate on the reservation form whether they need an accessible room. We also ask if they have room location requirements to accommodate their disabling condition such as being close to an elevator.

All program sessions begin with an announcement of the nearest emergency exit and instructions of what to do in case of an emergency.

We believe all organizations should have some plan to assure protection of disabled people who attend their meetings since more disabled persons are traveling to attend meetings.

Before our plan was implemented, we ran it by fire safety authorities in Chicago and Dallas. They agreed it was workable.

We are happy to report that convention and meeting planners from other organizations are beginning to show concern for attendees who may be disabled.

The American Library Association, for example, holds two major conferences yearly: a midyear meeting in January which brings together about 3,000 people and an annual conference in June which can bring as many as 14,000 people into a city. The people, who make the arrangements for meeting rooms, are asked by the con-

ference arrangements staff, to the association, to include accessibility needs in their written instructions.

Accessibility has impacted pleasure travel, too.

Look around Washington. The Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Capitol Building, all of our tourist attractions and museums are accessible. So are museums and places of interest to the traveler, on vacation, in many other cities.

Lets look at the impact of attitude changes on travel for disabled persons.

Today, disabled people are not content to stay home. They are making their mark as contributors to society. Consequently, they want to enjoy the fruits of their work and participate in what society has to offer. They are seen going places. They are seen doing things. They participate in meetings. They shop—they socialize.

As a result disabled people are being seen more and more as productive, contributing members of the society. They are being seen as people. And those impressions, those attitudes are also helping to open the doors to the world for disabled persons.

With the change of attitude toward disabled persons has come another positive view.

Disabled people are seen as a public or a market by the travel industry.

Today several travel agencies focus exclusively on, or have special expertise about, travel for disabled persons. And, those travel agencies which do not specialize in serving this public have trained their staffs to assist disabled travelers who contact them.

Like many airlines and Amtrak, some travel agencies have installed TTY's so they can communicate with customers who are deaf.

A major book publisher, Random House, has recognized that disabled people represents a viable market. A couple of years ago, Random House published the first commercial guide to Washington, D.C. to our knowledge, which included information about accessibility of monuments and other attractions, as part of the information about the city.

We believe all of this adds up to progress. Certainly we are confident that a manager can send an employee who is disabled on a business trip with confidence that he or she will be able to travel.

Having said that we are fully aware that the skies, the rails and the highways are not always friendly to the disabled traveler. For that matter, disabled and non-disabled travelers are in the mainstream together because the skies, rails and highways have had some bumps along the way for the able-bodied traveler.

We believe we must continue efforts to make travel routine for disabled persons. Specifically, there should be:

1. On-going training for airline, railroad, hotel, convention, auto rental and allied industry personnel. Yes, accessibility is in very large measure accountable for greater travel opportunities for disabled persons. But, awareness and understanding of the needs of disabled persons go hand-in-hand with accessibility and changes in attitudes.

2. The travel and hotel industries might maintain a dialogue with disabled people to learn of new developments, new assistive devices and techniques that improve the quality of life for disabled individuals.

3. In building new hotels, airports, convention facilities, etc., accessibility for disabled people must be built in during initial planning. It must not be put in as an afterthought.

4. Meeting and convention planners (especially those who are in business in this area) must pay closer attention to the needs of attendees who have disabilities. It makes no sense economically to consciously or unconsciously leave out or shut the door on a public which is proving to be a viable market. They cannot shrug off this responsibility by saying, "We don't need to do it because disabled people don't attend." They do attend. And, they'll attend in greater numbers if we make the environment conducive for them. Our Annual Meeting proves that.

[The following information was subsequently received for the record:]

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR INOUYE AND THE ANSWERS THERETO

Question. Would it be helpful if the committee were to urge the United States Travel and Tourism Administration to work with associations such as the American Psychological Association to address the psycho-social aspects of tourism and travel?

Answer. Yes. We believe it is most important that the psycho-social aspects of travel for disabled individuals be addressed. First of all, disabled individuals are traveling more—for business as well as pleasure. Second, there are some concerns

which they have. For example, we see more disabled persons at meetings and conventions. And some disabled persons might feel a bit ill at ease or apprehensive because they might wonder how will they be accepted by the group. Or, they might wonder how they'll cope with a new environment. Will there be barriers in their way? Can they deal with them? Certainly a program to assist disabled persons with new surroundings would go a long way to taking the stress out of travel.

One more thing—disabled and non-disabled workers both need vacations—a respite from the old grind. A cooperative effort between the U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration and groups such as the American Psychological Association could urge disabled workers to take a break, go some place and recharge their batteries. It could suggest ways to have fun away from home without being hasseled. And, I might add, that the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped has a subcommittee on recreation and leisure and it would be interested in working on the psycho-social aspects of travel for disabled persons.

The CAB has adopted regulations to ensure that handicapped persons receive adequate air transportation without unjust discrimination. Those regulations will, of course, expire at the end of the year when the CAB sunsets. As I understand it, no agency will have the authority to issue similar rules. In other words, it will be up to the market place to determine the nature and quality of the air transportation service handicapped persons will be offered.

Question. Do you think it is a good idea to let the market place be the sole decision maker in this matter?

Answer. To properly respond to this question, we contacted organizations representing persons with mobility, visual and hearing disabilities. They are unanimous in their belief that the market place should not be the sole determining factor of the nature and quality of air transport service to be offered disabled travelers. They believe some other agency will have to pick up the regulations pertaining to disabled travelers in order to protect their rights. The organizations of disabled persons suggested that current regulations, promulgated under section 404B of the Aviation Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, should be transferred to either the Federal Trade Commisssion or the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

Question. It has been suggested that there is need for the establishment of a computerized data base with a toll-free number to give the handicapped travelers information about airports, hotels, distinations and sightseeing attractions.

Some years ago I believe the travel service did have a multilingual nationwide toll-free information service with respect to tourism throughout the United States—travel phone USA (USTTA). That program was discontinued for lack of funds. Although at the time I believe it cost the travel service about $250,000. With USTTA's increased budget, would it be good idea to reinstate that program, and also include information for the handicapped traveler?

Answer. We believe such a data base has potential to answer many questions disabled persons ask before they travel for business or pleasure. However, we have some concerns. First, will the computerized system be more effective than existing guides and the services provided by a number of tour operators and the Moss Rehabilitation Hospital? Second, standards will have to be established for what is and what is not accessible and to whom. Third, a mechanism must be devised to capture all existing information on hotels, airports, airlines, bus companies, highway rest areas, railroads, restaurants, tourists attractions, etc. Fourth, with new hotels opening, who is going to survey them? And can this data base be kept up-to-date? Who will do it? We believe this concept warrants careful exploration.

Senator PRESSLER. Next I call panel No. 1, Ms. Helen Hartmann, president, South Dakota Association for the Blind, on behalf of the American Council of the Blind, Sioux Falls, SD. We are very proud that she is speaking for the national association today.

Also, we have Ms. Karen Mayry, on behalf of the National Federation of the Blind, from Rapid City, SD.

We understand that you have to leave for the airport at 5 o'clock, or at least Helen does. So we will meet that requirement very carefully. I am very proud to have you here. I apologize for being spread thin today. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays are tough in the Senate. All the rest is easy.

Helen, why don't you proceed.

STATEMENT OF HELEN HARTMANN, PRESIDENT, SOUTH DAKOTA ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND, ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND, ACCOMPANIED BY J. SCOTT MARSHALL, DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, AMERICAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

Ms. HARTMANN. Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, and subcommittee members.

I am Helen Hartmann, president of the South Dakota Association for the Blind.

Our organization is proud to be an affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, which in the past 23 years has worked to improve the lives of the Nation's blind citizens through legislation, legal advocacy, and public education concerning the capabilities of blind and visually impaired persons.

Senator PRESSLER. If you could pull that mike a little closer, it would be helpful. You are doing fine.

Ms. HARTMANN. It is sort of difficult with my magnifying glass getting in the way of it.

Senator PRESSLER. No; it is all right.

Ms. HARTMANN. Accompanying me today at the witness table is Mr. J. Scott Marshall, director of governmental affairs of our national office. We are both pleased for this opportunity to testify before the subcommittee concerning travel barriers faced by blind and visually impaired Americans.

I am sure that all of us agree that the blind and other handicapped people should have the right to enjoy travel and tourism on the same basis as nondisabled persons.

At this time, I wish to have you understand the term "legally blind." I have been termed legally blind, and what I would see at 20 feet, the normally sighted individual would see at 200 feet. With this explanation, I think you could realize the visual acuity that the blind and visually impaired travelers have in traveling across our Nation.

About three-fourths of the legally blind persons have usable vision. Most people who use guide dogs or canes fall into the severely visually impaired or totally blind category.

It is unfortunate that the blind and other handicapped travelers often encounter a variety of experiences while traveling, ranging from extremely positive to extremely negative. Since there are no uniform standards of accommodations in the travel industry, the blind and other handicapped travelers may face inappropriate, inconsistent, or even illegal treatment by service providers.

We realize the program with requests to accommodate the needs of the blind and other handicapped travelers will eventually be made.

Many hotels and restaurants have responded to our needs.

The national office as well as our State affiliate has the host convention committee meet with the hotel or motel personnel prior to convention each year to help train employees involved in providing guest services and to provide guidance with respect to such matters as braille markings on elevator call panels, braille menus, et cetera.

In our city a local motel installed the large print, raised numeral telephone dials.

Finally, as fully outlined in our written statement, the current legal protection against nondiscrimination on the basis of handicapped in the travel industry are fragmented and lack adequate enforcement.

On behalf of the South Dakota Association for the Blind and the American Council of the Blind, we thank you for this opportunity to share our views with this subcommittee. We will be happy to work with you further on this important issue.

At this time, I would like to tell you of my experience of 2 weeks ago today on my first trip to Washington, DC, to attend the American Council of the Blind's legislative workshop.

Upon boarding the plane in Sioux Falls, SD, I asked the stewardess to assist me to find my correct seat number. She just gave me a look, and I said: "I have a vision problem, and I cannot read those small numbers." She said: "The stewardess further down the aisle will assist you."

Upon approaching this stewardess, I asked her to please assist me in finding the correct seat, because I have a vision problem and I cannot read those numbers. She looked at me, and then she did assist me to the correct seat. But the feeling that I felt inside of me was, "You don't look blind." You don't have to look blind to have a visual impairment.

Today, I experienced an overwhelming situation. I had heard of it happening to others, but I didn't think that it would ever happen to me, yet it did. Upon arriving at the Sioux Falls Airport this morning to come to St. Louis, and then on to Washington, DC, I asked for ground assistance. I said that I was visually impaired, and I would need the aid of someone to walk with me to my next departure gate in transferring of planes.

As I got off of the plane in St. Louis, I asked the ticket agent at the gate reception area where my ground assistance person was that I had asked for. He said, "He is not here yet." He said, "If he is not here in a moment or two, I will ring him again."

I said, "The planes are late." My plane was to leave at 8:45 a.m. for Washington, DC, and it is now passed that time. I knew and understood that there was a stackup of planes this morning in St. Louis, consequently all planes were late. The ground assistance person came to me with a wheelchair. I said that I could walk.

The ticket agent said, "If I were you, I would get into the wheelchair and let him take you to the gate that you need." I did get into the wheelchair because of the expediency of time in catching my next plane, but I felt very uneasy in this situation.

When I arrived at my gate, I was told to stay in the wheelchair until a flight attendant came. There were some seats available, and I could have gotten out and sat with the rest of the people there, but I stayed in the wheelchair.

Then someone came out from behind the ticket counter, and took hold of my arm and lifted me up, and didn't even flip back the little footrests. I almost fell out on my nose. He took me down the long boarding tunnel, and there wasn't an airplane at the end of this tunnel. We walked down some metal stairs, that led to the runway area, and I boarded a van. They took me to the airplane.

Upon this occasion of my encounter this morning, I did see another incident. The van was to pick up another lady who was standing by an airplane. She needed assistance to go to another plane. This lady was elderly, short, quite heavyset. She was walking toward the van with a support cane, a three-pronged support cane. It wasn't that she was blind so it, wasn't a white support cane.

They asked her, and she did, but with quite a bit of stress, step up into this van to get to her plane. I thought that there should have been a small step provided for the elderly people to step into this van if they are to be taken to their other planes in this sort of accommodations.

A friend of mine had this experience of riding by bus. She was going to depart from her bus when she reached her destination. The bus driver opened the door and said, "There you go, Ma'am." It was a long step down. This lady has back and leg problems.

She is visually impaired, but very capable of getting around by walking. She just needed an extra step. Some bus terminals do provide this little extra step, but this one did not at this time. She said, "I can't step down that far." The bus driver said, "Then I guess you can stay on the bus." She did, then, make the big effort of stepping down, and going on her way.

I did have a positive approach to me for ground assistance when I left Washington, DC, 2 weeks ago. I went in and received my seating at the airline. I told the ticket agent that I needed ground assistance to get to the gate where my plane would be departing, because I was unfamiliar with the airport.

He said: "Sit down, Lady, we will have someone here in just a few minutes." In less than 5 minutes, a young lady came and offered me her arm. I said: "I can see you. I just need to walk beside someone who can see the signs and tell me which gate I need to go to." In this particular instance, there was someone who had been trained and knew what they were to do.

Now, I have lost my place in the statement.

Senator PRESSLER. I very much appreciate your recounting those experiences. I think they are very moving, and very important for this committee.

Let me say that you can submit your entire statement for the record, if you don't want to read all of it. You decide that. We do put the complete statements in, if you want to summarize or read your conclusions, whichever you are more comfortable with. You go ahead and do it your way.

Ms. HARTMANN. Some of the things I have listed are in the written statement that you do have. It was just a repeat of some of those comments.

I would say, from relating to you these experiences of the handicapped, that uniformity of governing policies in handling whatever situation, I think in all airlines, or in any mode of transportation, we do need some public education to all of the airline personnel, bus personnel, or whatever the mode of transportation.

We do thank you for this opportunity to participate and testify in your hearing today.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much.

I shall now call on Karen Mayry, who will speak on behalf of the National Federation of the Blind.

STATEMENT OF KAREN MAYRY, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF SOUTH DAKOTA, ON BEHALF OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND, ACCOMPANIED BY JAMES GASHEL, DIRECTOR, GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

Ms. MAYRY. Thank you, Senator. It is indeed a pleasure to be here today and have the opportunity to testify before the Senate subcommittee.

My name is Karen Mayry. I represent the National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota as its State president, and I am accompanied by Mr. James Gashel, director of governmental affairs for the National Federation of the Blind located in Baltimore.

I would like to tell you a bit about our organization, first, and that is that we, in South Dakota, have a large membership. We operate statewide and nationally. Members join through five chapters in the State and, because of our rural nature, we have many, many members-at-large. We are an organization of blind persons speaking for ourselves.

Since 1966, almost two decades ago, we, as an organization, have been working to do away with discriminatory practices in all areas regarding handicapped individuals. These include any public accommodations, public housing, restaurants, motels, and the areas of travel, buses, trains, cruises, and so forth. We have made a lot of progress, but we have, as you hear, a long ways to go.

We have dealt with the myths that surround handicapped individuals, and we find that often times we are all categorized in the same class. Even though our needs are different from those of persons in wheelchairs, we are treated as though we all have the same kinds of needs.

We have problems dealing with those myths from time to time, and we find that when we try to dispel them that those people we deal with get very angry and very hostile. It is very difficult for us to maintain our calm and our dignity, and not be humiliated by the treatment that is accorded to us.

In 1966, we did pass a public accommodations law which has had its benefits in South Dakota. In 1976, the South Dakota Legislature also passed a public accommodations law fashioned after our model white cane law. Therefore, today in South Dakota, our citizens have the benefits of that law. Therefore, they have accessibility to motels, restaurants, buses, and so forth. However, that is not true with some of the airlines that we deal with.

We also have dealt with the FAA. Unfortunately, in our viewpoint, the FAA regulations, which have been established, cannot really be called regulations or rules in that an individual who has a difficult problem with an airline may submit the paperwork, but we are not sure that it is even looked at, or if it is just filed away for safekeeping somewhere. So big deal. We can file the papers. So what? It does us no good, it seems.

Those airlines that are governed by 504(a) are very few, as you heard from the person who testified for the CAB. They are only

those airlines that receive Federal subsidies. Again, as you well know, the CAB is going to be no longer in existence at the end of this year, and there will be no recourse for any traveler who has a problem.

In the area of handicapped persons, some proponents will come to you and say that there are barriers that need to be done away with for travelers, and that a lower rate is necessary.

Mr. Chairman, at this time, we would urge you to not expand the lower rate fare. It is available already in some areas, but for the blind person to board an airplane, although there may be difficulties, it is not necessary for us to have a two-for-one fare.

The two-for-one fare tends to promote the kinds of things that happened to Ms. Hartmann today. It tends to make people more dependent, and the public to view us as a dependent group of individuals. We are, for the most part, very independent individuals.

Times have changed since 1927 when the idea came into being. Most of us who travel with canes are most competent travelers. We don't need nor do we want the kind of assistance that is available. However, should we want it, we can arrive at the airport by taxicab or other conveyance, and gain assistance from the curbside through check-in, through security, and on to the very plane itself.

A person need not even be able to put one foot ahead of the other to travel on the airlines. The sad part is that all handicapped persons are classified as needing all of that kind of help.

Sometimes we have to fight off the help that is offered to us, and if we don't, we have to be demeaned and humiliated by accepting that help. If we fight it off, we are treated very hostilely by the agents that are trying to assist us because, after all, they know best. They seem to be omnipotent, and if we don't accept their service, then we don't fly. This is not a good policy. We would prefer to be asked if we need assistance.

One who is blind is not allowed to sit on airlines in the exit row. Now, I ask you, who is better equipped to deal with the exit row when vision may be obscured through loss of electricity, or through smoke filling the cabin?

Frankly, we think that a blind person is very adept at doing that kind of thing. The airline personnel think otherwise.

In my experience, I was mistakenly assigned the exit row, and I had a very bad experience, and I was made the example of the airplane, as it seemed to me, because the airline didn't feel that I was a safe passenger for that particular seat. People shouldn't have to be victimized in this way.

Coming to this very hearing, I, too, had problems. I had asked for a seat midway back in the nonsmoking section, rows six, seven, or eight. Unbeknown to me, I was assigned the bulkhead seat, a very, very common practice when dealing with a handicapped person.

For the most part, I do not choose to sit in the bulkhead seat due to lack of leg space, and lack of a place to stow my long white flexibile cane. As predicted, that happened. I was asked to turn in my cane. I refused to do that.

Then, as we taxied down the runway, the gentleman who had the window seat was ordered to move and exchange seats with me. He was displeased and rightly so. I was ordered to take his seat. There was no question asked whether we chose to do that. It was

not a question of choice. It was, you will do it as we are now in our takeoff pattern. That made me feel like they wanted to get rid of me, put me someplace where I wouldn't bother them. It was humiliating to me and demeaning. That should not happen to citizens in this country.

I mentioned before that help is available to all of us if we choose to ask for it. Of course, we all pay for that through the price of our ticket. Again, let me mention that if the two-for-one fare were to be implemented into the airline area, we would pay for that through our expanded fares.

We, in the National Federation of the Blind, cannot justify the kind of payment that makes the handicapped person and the blind person more dependent, and we feel that the money would be much better spent by teaching better travel techniques with a cane or with a dog guide.

A few other illustrations will familiarize you with some of the kinds of things that have happened to us. Litigation in many cases has been the only recourse. Often, these could have been resolved without litigation, provided the individuals involved would have taken some things into consideration.

Donna Yates, a young, bright, attractive blind person from New York State, applied to Single World for a cruise in the spring of 1981. She paid for her fare. She got her ticket, and she was all set to go. In April of 1981, her money was returned to her. The company felt no obligation to take her. They didn't feel that they were doing her wrong. She was a blind person.

They stated that their crew was not equipped "to handle" her. No cabinmate would want to be responsible for her, nor was their ship built to accommodate her. Now for some handicapped persons, ships might not be able to accommodate them with their narrow passages and their small hallways. However, in a blind person's case, that is not true.

Donna was upset, naturally, by this turn of events. Eventually, the situation was resolved, and happily so. However, it took 2 years to resolve that situation, and she did finally go on her cruise, unaccompanied, and enjoyed every minute of it. It was unnecessary for 2 years of hassle to occur before she was able to take the cruise that she chose.

In the area of insurance, several years ago, two people were traveling out of Des Moines, IA. They applied for insurance at the airport. The wife was allowed to buy up to $325,000 worth of insurance. The husband, who happened to be blind, was allowed only to buy $20,000 of insurance. That was through Teletrip, a subsidiary of Mutual of Omaha.

What does that say to us? Does it say that the blind person's life is worth less than the sighted person? He was making more money as an employed individual than she was. She also was employed.

Does that say that if the plane should happen to go down, Heaven forbid, that he was more likely to be killed because he was blind? It seems to me that if the plane went down, both of them, very likely, would have been killed. Yet, his life was valued only at $20,000. Eventually, in Iowa, insurance regulations were adopted so that that won't happen again.

In South Dakota, we, last year, passed legislation which allows now for blind persons to buy life insurance at standard rates. It was modeled after the other Federal laws, the white cane law, for example. We are still working on a travel insurance law. We don't have that protection for blind persons in South Dakota.

Mr. Chairman, I would say that at this time we need clear, concise, comprehensive, universal regulations or rules which would protect blind travelers. We do not have that protection at this time. The National Federation of the Blind would be most willing to work with you and any committee members to establish those kinds of rules which are at this time desperately needed by blind persons.

We have a bill, which was submitted, called the Handicapped American Opportunity Travel Act, by the National Federation of the Blind. Mr. Gashel is able to speak on that, if you wish.

We thank you for the opportunity to testify today. We are certain that these hearings will bring good things to the handicapped and that you will move ahead with regulations.

Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF KAREN MAYRY, PRESIDENT, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND OF SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. Chairman, my name is Karen Mayry. I am President of the National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota. My address is Box 346 Pinetree Drive, Rapid City, South Dakota 57702. I am accompanied by James Gashel, Director of Governmental Affairs for the National Federation of the Blind. I appreciate the opportunity you have extended to me to appear before this Subcommittee, today, to present the views of the National Federation of the Blind on the current status of travel policies and practices which affect us.

Mr. Chairman, I will begin this testimony with a word or two to describe the nature of our organization and its character as the representative voice of our nation's one-half million blind citizens. We estimate there are 15,000 blind and visually impaired South Dakotans. Our Federation, which operates statewide and nationally, is a membership organization of blind persons. People join the Federation through membership in five local chapters in South Dakota and we have several at-large members. We are the blind speaking for ourselves.

Today we are here to discuss travel policy. This is an area of social interaction and commerce which has received much attention by our Federation over a period of several years. As early as 1966 we began an effort to eradicate discrimination against the blind, the visually impaired, and the otherwise physically disabled in the use of public buildings, public facilities, public accommodations, transportation systems, housing, and so on. This effort bore fruit in South Dakota in 1976 when our legislature enacted a statute patterned after a model law developed by the National Federation of the Blind. The principle behind the model law is that travel and tourism policies should assure all citizens equal access to the facilities of common carriers, public buildings, amusements, and places of public accommodation.

Some representatives who will appear before this Subcommittee will, undoubtedly, testify to difficulties they may have with architectural or physical design barriers found in facilities and structures used in the transportation and travel industry. Others may ask for special accommodations or reduced rates because of a handicap. There is a widespread myth that all persons classified as handicapped are blocked by these physical barriers. We are not. It is critical to understand distinctive needs and not to over generalize about the handicapped. The greatest issue of accessibility for the disabled including the blind is removing the barriers of ignorance and misconception. These are barriers caused by social attitudes, not bricks and mortar. Barriers of attitude can be forced to crumble if Congress backs this with proper laws at the federal level.

We, in the National Federation of the Blind, have worked hard to remove the barriers of ignorance and misconception. Our specific purpose has been to lead our nation to a greater understanding of blindness and acceptance on terms of equality

for all of our citizens who are blind. I feel we have made great progress, but much remains to be done. Our nation's laws governing travel and the use of public accommodations by the handicapped lack specific mandates or are otherwise a patchwork quilt to the extent that they exist at all. Aside from the Model White Cane Law and a few initiatives there is no generally applicable, universal mandate designed to ban discrimination on the basis of blindness or handicap in the use of travel facilities and public accommodations.

Mr. Chairman, we are desperately in need of such a mandate. The regulation (or failure to regulate) discrimination in the commercial aviation industry in our country is a classic example of why Congress should step in now to provide an overall federal mandate. In April, 1977, the FAA made some rules. You will find the rule to which I am referring at 14 CFR 121.586. I refer to this as only a purported rule because of its character and effect. First, not the title: "Authority To Refuse Transportation." Now that is a positive approach. Here is a rule which was supposed to be intended to eliminate or reduce discrimination on the basis of handicap. It exists today as the most comprehensive rule (if you can call it a rule) on discrimination against the handicapped in air travel. So, here it is, "Authority To Refuse Transportation."

Sadly, and to our disadvantage, the weaknesses of this rule do not stop with its title. 14 CFR 121.586 says that no air carrier may refuse to transport a handicapped person unless two requirements are met—(1) the handicapped person cannot be carried in accordance with the airline's procedures, or (2) the handicapped person fails to comply with the airline's notice requirements. If we fail to meet either of these conditions, transportation may be denied. And, how are we to know which procedures apply to which airlines, or if there are notice requirements.

FAA's rule fails to state a consistent, clear, and universally applicable federal policy. The rule does not identify prohibited conduct and places no restraint upon airline discretion in making the procedures, other than the fact that if they exist they must be filed with the FAA. Big deal. This is no protection. Its regulations merely grant authority to refuse transportation on the basis of handicap, provided certain conditions are met and the airlines determine the conditions. Some protection. Absent a mandate from FAA against discrimination on the basis of handicap, only a few airlines are subject to the nondiscrimination requirement of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. These are airlines who receive federal assistance from the Civil Aeronautics Board, soon to be a nonexistent federal agency. When the CAB closes later this year, there will be no enforcement agency to protect our civil rights in air travel.

This in a nut shell is the current status of the law on prohibiting discrimination against blind and handicapped people in air travel. The lack of a consistent and clearly articulated federal policy has fostered uncertainty, tension, and in some instances even hostility on the part of airlines in their dealings with blind and handicapped people. We have been forced to litigation in several instances. But, these confrontations could have been avoided or certainly minimized if there had been stronger federal leadership by the agencies responsible for safeguarding the interests of the public, including blind and handicapped taxpaying citizens. Nor have such difficulties been limited strictly to commercial aviation. Cruise ships, lodging places, eating establishments, and amusement parks have also on occasion sought to block our entry or otherwise to limit our participation. Occurrences of this sort are admittedly less common than the acts of discrimination which take place in commercial air travel. However, a comprehensive federal policy should address the entire spectrum of the travel industry, both transportation and public accommodations.

When we talk of discrimination on the basis of blindness or handicap in the travel industry, I want to be clear with you about what we mean. In its essential terms, the word "discrimination" as used in connection with human rights and the repression of minorities or women means unreasonable and detrimental classification. It implies, of course, prejudice, denial of opportunity, unequal treatment, or treatment which is different from that accorded to others. To be discriminatory, the classification must be both unreasonable and detrimental.

The discriminations against blind or handicapped people are often not recognized as such. They cloak themselves in many guises. Charitable feelings and the best of intentions are almost inevitably involved. There is great concern (or at least expressed concern) for our safety. So the desire to protect and care for us is almost without exception the common motive. Few acts of discrimination against the blind or handicapped are based on raw hatred as sometimes may be the case with other minorities. But combatting hatred would probably be easier than trying to confront

an overprotective and benevolent spirit. Nevertheless, we must do so if we are to gain our equal place in society.

The attitude of benevolence, coupled with the mistaken belief that the blind are unsafe when we travel have led some to propose reduced rate transportation. Indeed some carriers, such as interstate buslines and Amtrak do have special low-price arrangements. These came about historically at the time when mobility training and techniques for the blind were not fully developed. However, the situation is markedly different today. But despite the fact that blind people are traveling independently today, some who purport to speak on behalf of the blind still advocate expanding reduced fare accommodations to the commercial aviation industry. Mr. Chairman, we oppose any such expansion!

Our opposition to reduced rate or two-for-one air travel is based both on matters of practical fact and deeply-held principles which call for equal treatment and equal responsibility. On the practical side, most airlines have developed elaborate procedures under which they are able to assist persons with very limited mobility. The traveler need not even be able to put one foot ahead of the other. The blind passenger who comes to the airport by taxi or other conveyance can be escorted from curbside through check-in to the gate and on to the plane. If a transfer is to be made, agents will be notified and someone will be on hand to help. If a lengthy layover is involved, airline personnel will see to it that the passenger is made comfortable. Once at the airport of his or her destination, the blind traveler can be assisted with reclaiming baggage and securing a taxi or other form of ground transportation. Sometimes this elaborate assistance is available whether we need it or not. In my own experience, it is sometimes necessary to fight off those who want to provide assistance when I don't need them. So, from a practical standpoint, there are simply no facts to support the argument that a blind person must have a sighted traveling companion on our nation's airlines.

Beyond the practical considerations which argue against reducing airfares on the basis of blindness or handicap, doing so violates basic principles we have established which argue for equal rights and responsibilities. The fact is that airlines who offer half-fare prices to the handicapped will need to recover their costs from other travelers who do not qualify. Thus, the price of an average airline ticket will inevitably rise. How is such a burden on all other travelers justified? In our view it is not. In the first place, I have already mentioned the modern mobility techniques which enable us to travel independently. For those who are untrained in these methods, it would be better to invest our tax dollars in mobility training than to expect other travelers to pay the bill while the untrained are encouraged to travel at a lower rate. Furthermore (as already noted) persons who must travel and need some help in doing so will find all the assistance they need waiting for them at the airport—at a cost which all air travelers now bear. It is an elementary fact of life that the equality we seek as blind people will not come by asking society to make special concessions or accommodations which are unneeded and which foster dependence, rather than independence. We must be prepared to shoulder equal responsibility and to use the skills we have or can acquire in order to uphold our equal responsibilities along with our equal rights in society.

The following examples may help to illustrate how discrimination—unreasonable and detrimental treatment—manifests itself in the case of the blind. These illustrations could be multiplied several fold. They help to describe the problem and the difficulty we have in dealing with it in the absence of protective laws.

First, some personal encounters in air travel. In my capacity as president of the National Federation of the Blind of South Dakota, I often find it necessary to take trips throughout our state or occasionally across the nation. My experiences in these travels have brought me to conclude that air travel for blind persons is often a personally distasteful and compromising experience. Sometimes it is literally a struggle to maintain a sense of dignity and self-respect in the face of unreasonable demands by airline personnel. For example, if a blind person happens to be assigned to an over-wing exit row seat, we can expect a confrontation. Most carriers ban seating of the blind or the handicapped in seats adjacent to the exits on the presumption that we would be hazards to ourselves and others in an emergency. I ask you, if the plane fills with smoke, who better to lead the exit than someone (such as a blind person) who is proficient under conditions where vision is obscured? But, people with undetectable difficulties—epilepsy, heart conditions, fear of flying, and so forth—may be seated in the exit rows without restriction. Merely the image of a blind person, never mind the facts, prevents our being treated as responsible adults. It is personally humiliating and degrading to be subjected to such unreasonable and detrimental restrictions. This I can tell you from first-hand experience, for I have been the victim of such treatment. Even on the trip which brought me to Washing-

ton, DC for this very hearing, I faced the kind of treatment which is absolutely unnecessary and demeaning. On Sunday morning, May 20, I sought to board United Airlines Flight 548 in Denver, after having flown from Rapid City a few hours earlier without incident. But, boarding in Denver for my flight to Baltimore was a different story. I requested a seat midway back in the nonsmoking section, approximately row 6 or 7. I asked for an aisle seat. However, without telling me, the agent assigned me a seat in the bulkhead. This is an all-too-common practice—to assign every blind or handicapped person a seat in the bulkhead, whether we want one or not. Mostly, I do not want to sit in the bulkhead seats because there is not enough leg room and it is far more difficult to stow my low flexible travel cane. This, indeed, proved to be the case when I boarded Flight 548. The flight attendant's solution to my cane-stowage problem was to demand that I move and to inconvenience the other two passengers in my row, as the plane was rolling down the runway for takeoff. They wanted to put me near the window, I guess where I would be more out of the way. It was an entirely unpleasant experience, because the passenger who had requested a window seat was forced to abandon it and voiced his displeasure over the flight attendant's order. Inevitably, I would be viewed as the cause of all of this inconvenience—a fact which is the essence of the discriminatory conduct in an incident such as this. But even more troublesome, persons who are not blind or handicapped can generally travel without concern that their trip will be spoiled with an incident of this sort or possibly interrupted altogether. There have been other circumstances where blind people have been denied boarding on grounds of safety or some other fallacious rationale. Incidents such as this illustrate a kind of arbitrariness which we face in travel and tourism today, because so often there are few laws or regulations to govern the conduct of the industry. Agents, representatives, and other personnel with whom we must deal represent themselves as omnipotent—all powerful and all knowing. Either we cooperate on their terms or we are not served. Individual preference makes no difference. The handicapped are the handicapped. We are all to be treated alike regardless of circumstances. This is true in air travel as well as other forms of transportation or public accommodations.

And they say there is no discrimination: How about a Caribbean cruise? In the spring of 1981, Donna Yates, a young, bright, and attractive well-trained blind woman paid her money and signed up to take a Caribbean cruise. That is where her troubles began. The New York City booking agency (Singleworld) was glad to serve Donna. But under date of May 20, 1981, the Costa Cruise Line who owned and operated the ship upon which Donna intended to sail returned her payment, explaining that neither the company nor any prospective cabinmate could bear the responsibility for having to care for an unattended blind person on board ship. So what? Donna required no care and wanted no attendant. She was perfectly capable of attending to herself. However, the idea that Donna was blind triggered images of helplessness and dependency in the minds of Costa Cruise Lines representatives. Under such circumstances, they felt perfectly at ease returning Donna's money and refusing to book the cruise. It was not a matter of discrimination. To the cruise line officials it was simple common sense—you do not accept an unaccompanied blind person on board ship. The ship isn't built for them. Whatever that means.

This is a clear illustration of how misconceptions and an overgeneralization as to the needs of "the handicapped" can result in acts of unreasonable and detrimental treatment. As a matter of practical and provable fact (although I have not personally inspected every cruise ship) there is simply no sailing vessel built for the travelling public which cannot be negotiated with safety by someone who is blind. True enough, some handicapping conditions may well prevent travel in certain areas on certain types of vessels. This may be especially true where steep stairways or narrow passages and doorways are involved. But, none of these or similar barriers is a matter of concern to a blind person booking a cruise. Donna Yates had paid her money as was required of a prospective passenger, and she rightfully expected to be treated like anyone else. Denying her was unreasonable and detrimental and thus the refusal constituted discrimination on the basis of blindness.

But the incident had a happy ending as we were able to make an appeal to the New York State Human Rights Agency. The investigators found probable cause for a judgment that the Costa Cruise Line had violated the New York State Human Rights Act. Then a settlement was eventually negotiated with the company. Donna could take her cruise unhampered and unrestricted. But it took a fight of nearly two years duration to do it. This illustrates the value of having protective legislation.

Travel Insurance: Discrimination against the blind which sometimes occurs in travel insurance is among the most shocking manifestations of unreasonable and detrimental treatment. In one instance which came to light only a few years ago,

the Mutual of Omaha Insurance Company, doing business through a subsidiary carrier called Tele-Trip at the Des Moines, Iowa, Municipal Airport, agreed to sell a sighted woman flight insurance in any amount up to $325,000, but declined to sell her blind husband the same insurance to cover him for any more than $20,000. Both were employed. He earned more money than she did. Both would be riding on the same plane, and neither intended to fly it. They merely intended to sit there and ride along with all of the other passengers.

If the plane went down, God forbid, all (or mostly all) on board would probably be killed. It is doubtful that the tragedy would have a greater impact upon a sighted passenger than on a blind one or that the blind passenger would be more likely to die. There is simply no evidence that blind people are greater hazards on commercial airplanes, contrary to the apparent view of Tele-Trip. Is it that the life of a blind person is less valuable than the life of someone who is sighted? It is simply impossible to imagine any justification for a discriminatory insurance practice such as this. Indeed, the matter was protested to the Iowa state insurance commissioner. There was widespread publicity. Eventually, the insurance company relented on its policy. But it is doubtful that there was any legal requirement which bound the company to do so. Discrimination against the blind in insurance was not at that time specifically prohibited by any law or regulation. In fact, it was partly this incident which led to the state insurance department's promulgation of a broad anti-insurance discrimination mandate, prohibiting insurance carriers from treating blind people differently from others as a class. Iowa was the first state to enact such a nondiscrimination insurance regulation. Last year, South Dakota followed suit with enactment of a state law similar to the Iowa regulation. But discrimination by travel insurance carriers is still not outlawed in our state and in most parts of the country because of the current status of inadequate laws and regulations.

Mr. Chairman, I have stated earlier that the major problem we face in the travel and tourism industry is the lack of a comprehensive, consistent, and clear federal policy. The laws, to the extent that they exist at all are fragmented and subject to widely varying interpretations. Congress should consider the value of our experience in utilizing the White Cane Laws, such as the statute we have in South Dakota, which are enormously successful. This might well be instructive in charting a course of action at the federal level. Most significant of all is the fact that our South Dakota law has served as well as a shield against discrimination. It has not been necessary for us to resort to litigation under this statute as of yet. In fact, we have found the travel industry capable of responding positively when we could show that a law exists to protect us. In one case, the Happy Chef Restaurant in Rapid City refused to serve a blind person accompanied by a dog guide, because they said there was a law against having animals in a restaurant. But, our law speaks directly to this problem. When we explained the law to the manager of the Happy Chef, he said he would serve the individual in question and inform his employees about the law. To our knowledge, there has not been a similar incident since with Happy Chef. In another case, the Thrifty Scot Motel in Pierre threatened to deny a blind guest with a guide dog access to the motel's coffee room. This, again, merely required that we inform the motel management that a law protects the right of a blind person to the use of all public accommodations and facilities therein. So we have had good success in these and other incidents. In general, the White Cane Law has served as a tool of public information about blindness and our ability to compete on terms of equality in our society today.

Mr. Chairman, I hope these hearings are truly an expression of strong Congressional interest in improving statutory protection for blind and handicapped people against discriminatory treatment in the travel and tourism industry. Our experience in South Dakota and throughout the United States as I have mentioned should be looked upon as an example and a model for federal action. We are anxious to assist you in preparing legislation which would be appropriate to accomplish this objective—to provide a consistent, clear, and comprehensive federal policy so that travel and tourism throughout our land will be free of discrimination on the basis of blindness or handicap. We pledge our strong efforts to this endeavor and urge Congress to move forward with remedial legislation as soon as possible. Mr. Chairman, again I thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of blind consumers in the travel and transportation industry and appreciate your efforts on our behalf.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much.

I am very proud that two South Dakotans were selected to speak for the two associations. You might identify the other people at the table for the purposes of the record.

Mr. GASHEL. Mr. Chairman, my name is James Gashel, I am director of governmental affairs for the National Federation of the Blind.

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. Chairman, I am Scott Marshall, and I am the director of governmental affairs for the American Council of the Blind.

Senator PRESSLER. I am familiar with both of you, and I want to compliment you both for being here, and for your assistance.

I think a basic point has been made here by both of you, and that is that although we have said that things can be done in the private sector and voluntarily, it seems to me that it contradicts USTTA's position that everything be left to the private sector.

How can you expect all of the airports and airlines to adopt uniform procedures without some sort of law or regulation? Do you think that it can be done privately if they meet, and do it voluntarily, or do you think that it will take regulations or additional legislation?

You might want to think about that and respond in writing later. But you can go ahead now, if you wish.

Mr. GASHEL. Do you have time for a brief response?

Senator PRESSLER. Go ahead.

Mr. GASHEL. I would say that it is a mixture of voluntary effort backed by appropriate Federal legislation. The problem is now that there is, as Karen said, no general applicable, universally, and consistent Federal policy in this area similar, for example, to the South Dakota white cane law.

Bear in mind that since 1976, it has never been necessary to litigate any question under the South Dakota white cane law, or the similar white case laws which exist in many States. Only in a few cases has litigation been necessary. Yet those laws have been immensely beneficial.

In the written statement, Karen cites instances where we have been able to use the South Dakota white cane law to deal with discriminatory actions, and we have found the travel industry to be quite agreeable once you are able to wave a piece of paper that says, according to the South Dakota white cane law of the legislature, this is the way it is supposed to be.

I expect that we would find the same thing to be true if, at the Federal level, Congress would now act to adopt a very general and broad Federal policy to provide our overall rights to access to travel throughout this country. We anticipate very little litigation under that statute, and a whole lot of voluntary cooperation by the travel industry.

Mr. MARSHALL. I agree with Mr. Gashel that a Federal uniform policy is required. I think that much can be done and has been done in education, and sensitivity training of airline employees, and other travel industry professionals. We cite some examples in our statement.

I do agree that there does come a time, and we see this in many other civil rights contexts, where you need legal protection. Right now, under the current status of the CAB 504 regulations, and the FAA rules, we have virtually nothing.

Senator PRESSLER. I would like to ask this question. I understand that the National Federation of the Blind was instrumental in con-

vincing the Federal Aviation Administration to allow blind travelers to bring canes on board commercial aircraft.

Now that the FAA permits canes on board, have all of the airlines changed their policies and permitted blind travelers to bring canes on their flights?

Mr. GASHEL. Maybe they have on paper. I think the situation has improved, although we still find some who try to take canes. It happens to a lot of us.

We were successful in that effort, but that required litigation. It required marching on the FAA, et cetera. Now we are able to keep our canes, and there is a Federal policy on that. I think it shows the benefits of having some degree of overall Federal mandate that now the situation has improved for us. Guide dogs is the next problem.

Senator PRESSLER. Let's talk about that. Do all of you have comments on that?

Mr. GASHEL. The problem with guide dogs is that they are let on board, but people are restricted, on some airlines, to certain seats. This is difficulty with the current FAA procedures. What happens, Mr. Chairman, is that these rules are published under a heading called "Authority to Refuse Transportation."

What it says is that an airline may refuse transportation to a person who is handicapped, unless the airline has procedures for carrying such an individual, and the individual cannot be carried in accordance with the airline's procedures. It is a real circular kind of thing.

So it leaves it up to each and every airline to have their own procedures. So if I travel with a dog guide on United Airlines, I can sit in any seat that I could otherwise sit in if I didn't have a dog. But if I travel on some other air carrier, for example, American Airlines, American Airlines now has a policy that you have to sit in the bulkhead seat if you have a guide dog. It is totally discretionary with the airlines, and FAA, apparently, has no policy or views on the matter.

We recently asked American Airlines to change their procedure, and they flatly refused. That is documented in correspondence. They, in fact, seemed to refuse to discuss it any further with us. You see, that is precisely the problem. We should enhance communication, not cut off communication.

We invited five major air carriers to the National Federation of the Blind Convention coming up in July. One accepted. They take a positive approach toward us anyway, so they were glad to come and tell about what they are going to do.

Senator PRESSLER. I do have some additional questions. The thrust of our questions is along this line: If we need more rules, or if we are able to get some agreement or some initiative from the private sector, which we will look for first, I think that your testimony has been very valuable here today.

I do want to thank you, if you can respond in writing.

Next, I am going to call Dr. Harold Snider, who has been very patient, the immediate past president of the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, to the witness table.

I am going to have to recess this hearing for about 3 minutes, while you are getting seated, Dr. Snider. There are some Vietnam

veterans out here. We passed the agent orange legislation this morning, and I guess I am the only person who served in Vietnam in the Senate, so they have been wanting to see me. I am going to go and see them for about 2 minutes, and then I am going to come right back in. Excuse me just for a minute. When I come back, we will hear your testimony.

[Recess.]

Senator PRESSLER. I apologize to you, Harold. You have been very good at the press conference, and you are a good sport. I enjoy working with you very much.

We will hear your testimony.

STATEMENT OF DR. HAROLD SNIDER, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT, SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TRAVEL FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Dr. SNIDER. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

It is a pleasure to be here and testify about improving and permitting travel and tourism opportunities for handicapped people. I would like to commend you and the committee for holding these hearings. We really need these kinds of public fora to begin to get some of the problems as well as some of the opportunities out in the open.

Society for Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped is kind of a unique organization. It is an international membership organization of travel agents, tour operators, hotel and airline executives, and handicapped people, some of whom represent themselves, some of whom represent advocacy organizations of and for handicapped people.

We are a 501(c)(3) tax exempt educational, charitable organization, but we are part of the travel industry. We are a bridge organization. We bridge the gap between those organizations specifically dedicated to serving the needs of a particular disability group and the travel industry, because we can see it from both sides of the fence.

A lot of our members are specialists in providing tours, and travel and tourism opportunities for handicapped people, and have a great deal of experience to bring to bear on the situation of handicapped travelers.

It is really a great thing that these hearings are being held during the first National Tourism Week. It makes me proud because handicapped people are being mainstreamed into that activity. They are not being held during a special Handicapped Week. They are being held as part of the National Tourism Week, and that is really important.

Several advocacy organizations of and for handicapped people and elderly people have asked Congress for legislation which would require airlines to permit a blind or a handicapped passenger to travel with an able bodied escort at a discounted two-for-one fare. Public Law 95-163 permitted airlines to give this discount, but made its application optional for each carrier. Subsequent legislation to deregulate the airline industry has nullified the effect of Public Law 95-163.

Most advocacy organizations of handicapped persons, including the Society for Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, and the National Federation of the Blind, continue to oppose the establishment or reestablishment of discounted air travel for handicapped persons as a class. We believe that handicapped travelers want service, and not charity from the travel industry.

We also believe that because of the economics of providing good service, the travel industry can ill afford to give charity. It should be noted that for obvious economic reasons, no airline has initiated discounted two-for-one fares for blind or handicapped persons. It does not make good business sense.

Therefore, SATH opposes special discounts for handicapped travelers. We believe that sufficient competition and discounted travel already exist within the industry. Furthermore, we believe that the discounted travel for the handicapped can only lead to continued segregation and discrimination against handicapped travelers.

We urge the Congress not to pass laws which force the travel industry to give charity to the handicapped. Although there is great sympathy for the handicapped, and there is a tendency to give discounts and special compensation to low income groups, we believe that handicapped Americans would rather be treated with dignity and equality by the travel industry.

For the last few months, Mr. Chairman, I have been urging the U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration to do something about its outdated brochure on Travel Tips for the Handicapped, which went out of print in 1982. That brochure was published in 1977, and it had some good information in it from 1977. It had information about transportation, accommodations, and some possible destinations for handicapped travelers.

It was mainly written for those who were mobility impaired and in wheelchairs. It only mentioned briefly the problems of other handicapped Americans. Since people in wheelchairs are a small percentage of the 35 million handicapped Americans, we thought that it was important that when that brochure was to be revised, it should cover all handicapped people.

For the last couple of years, since 1982, SATH has worked with the USTTA very closely, and we have done a lot of answering of their correspondence in the area of travel for the handicapped. The record will speak for itself.

I would quite frankly dispute Under Secretary Tuttle's assertion that their staff is fully trained in working and providing information to people about handicapped travelers because, quite frankly, on a regular basis, we continue to get cables from their overseas offices which they pass along to us. Letters from handicapped people, which they receive, they pass on to us. For 2 years, I think we got a great deal of that correspondence, and we, in the private sector, had to use small amounts of funds to answer that correspondence.

We put some fairly heavy pressure on USTTA. This year, Mrs. Tuttle decided that she would help us by issuing a purchase order so that we could rewrite the brochure that had gone out of print. We decided to reorient the brochure toward the mission of USTTA, and toward the goals of travel and tourism industry in this country, to call it "The United States Welcomes Handicapped Visitors."

We think that it is a much more positive title than "Travel Tips for the Handicapped."

We are particularly grateful to Greyhound Corp. for coming in with a $10,000 contribution to help print and publish that brochure. Mrs. Tuttle told us that USTTA didn't have the money to print and publish that brochure, and we would have to go out into the private sector and find that money. Well, we did. We are very lucky to have found it. We are very grateful to the National Tour Association, and the United Bus Owners of America for helping us find Greyhound as a source of funding for that brochure.

The new brochure is going to have some new and important sections in it, which affect handicapped people, and which will be of great aid to handicapped people coming from overseas. We are going to have the specific visa and Customs regulations as they affect handicapped travelers.

For instance, if a guy comes into this country in a $3,000 powered wheelchair, if he doesn't know the U.S. tariff number for exempting that chair from duty, a Customs inspector could theoretically charge him duty on that $3,000 wheelchair. So we are going to put in the brochure what the tariff number is to exempt that wheelchair from duty. That is really important.

A handicapped traveler coming in here might get a nasty surprise at Customs. It has happened to me. I bring Braille writing equipment in and out of the country with me from meetings. The Customs people look at it, and every time they try to charge me duty. Then when I quote them the right tariff number, they say: "That is right. It is in the tariff. You know the number. Go on about your business." So we are going to put that in there.

We are going to put in there: What does a handicapped person do if they find themselves in an emergency? What happens if someone breaks their white cane in Sioux Falls, or Rapid City? Where do they go to get a new white cane? We are going to put 800 numbers, and other kinds of emergency numbers in that brochure.

We are also going to put in that brochure what some of the legal protections are that handicapped people have that they can fall back on in this country. If a handicapped person who has a dog guide with him gets tossed out of a restaurant, what can they do? Where do they go to get help? That is important. It is a basic freedom.

That brochure should be printed and available for distribution by no later than August 31, and perhaps a lot sooner than that.

Society for Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped has participated as an active member of the Advisory Board of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus in the U.S. House of Representatives since its beginning.

We believe that our participation in the Caucus Advisory Board has helped to make the Members of the House of Representatives aware of the needs of handicapped travelers. Our participation has also made us aware of pending legislation concerning the travel industry, and how that legislation might affect handicapped travelers.

We are aware that a similar Advisory Board on Travel and Tourism has been at work here in the U.S. Senate. SATH would be very interested in participating in the work of that Advisory Board as a

member, and we would be very grateful if you would give our request careful consideration as soon as it is possible to make new appointments to that Advisory Board.

SATH is very interested in encouraging travel and tourism organizations, either Federal or private sector, to do more research to quantify what the handicapped travel market is. If it is really $30 billion, let's make sure that it is. Let's see how much money is out there. How often handicapped people travel. Why they travel. Do they travel mostly to conventions? Do they travel mostly with family and friends?

There is very little research data that is available about why and how handicapped people travel, and we would like to encourage the travel industry, the Federal and congressional entities to help us and work with us to do research to quantify the market potential for handicapped travel.

During the testimony, there was a discussion about a computerized data base for handicapped travelers. One of the greatest difficulties facing handicapped travelers is the lack of information about hotels, airports, sightseeing attractions, and destinations. That lack of information exemplifies what the greatest fear about handicapped travel is, as we found it, that is the fear of the unknown.

There is no single up-to-date source which can be consulted by the handicapped travelers or their families which will give information about services and architectural accessibility. Access guides to many cities have been published in the last few years, but they are out of date almost as soon as they are published.

With sufficient funding from the private sector and the Federal Government, it would be possible to establish and update a computerized data base with a toll free number. This data base could serve both the handicapped traveler and their families, and the travel agents and tour operators making arrangements for handicapped travelers.

Since it is now possible for computers to talk to one another, airline reservation services could and should be a part of this data base and exchange information with it. It shouldn't be just a segregated data base for handicapped people, but it should interact with the other data bases which already exist in the travel and tourism industry.

This data base could also serve to promote tourism to the United States by handicapped persons from overseas who could easily obtain information in advance of their trip. At present, the travel industry itself cannot identify and quantify the number, availability, and location of accessible hotel and motel rooms, aircraft accessibility, and other kinds of important information essential to the handicapped traveler.

We found that out in trying to do the research for our brochure. You just can't quantify it. You can't put a figure on the number and kinds of accessible facilities that there are across the country. That kind of information needs to be gathered in one place so that you can get access to it.

SATH wishes to coordinate the establishment of a computerized data base of information for handicapped travelers because we be-

lieve that we have the expertise to do it, because we represent both the travel industry and the handicapped community.

An interesting byproduct of the establishment of such a data base of travel information for the handicapped is that the gathering of that information and data entry into the computer, and giving the information over the telephone, could be done by handicapped employees, thus providing trained information specialists for the travel industry who are themselves handicapped.

The single greatest problem that those of us who are handicapped face when we travel is the ignorance, prejudice, and general lack of understanding of the needs of handicapped travelers by personnel in the travel and tourism industry. This lack of adequate training results in harmful and unnecessary discrimination against the handicapped traveler. I want to give you a couple of personal examples; you have had some others today. These are documented; they are on the record.

Several years ago, a flight attendant on Eastern Airlines attempted to physically force me to sit on a blanket, stating that it was a Federal regulation that blind and handicapped passengers had to sit on blankets because they were incontinent and could not control their bladders. I told the Eastern flight attendant that urination had nothing to do with my blindness. I subsequently took legal action against Eastern Airlines and reached an out of court settlement. It was a good settlement.

Similarly, while traveling, I often take along a Braille edition of Playboy magazine, published with Federal funds by the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. On discovering that I was reading Playboy in Braille, two flight attendants from different airlines recently said that they were surprised that blind people were interested in sex.

In January 1984, while flying to Florida on Piedmont Airlines, I was approached by a Piedmont employee who put his hands on my shoulders and screamed in my left ear, "We are going to put you on the plane now." I informed him that no one was putting me anywhere—I am a bit heavy to move, you see. I was paying for my ticket just like everyone else, and that I would get on the plane when and if I pleased by myself.

Incidentally, the president of Piedmont Airlines, and Norm Fillion, the president of the Air Transport Association, have refused to return my telephone calls on this issue.

Such callous, insensitive and downright rude treatment is, unfortunately, a regular occurrence. Agencies such as the Federal Aviation Administration, as we have already heard, passed rules about blind people flying with their canes, and it took a law suit by the National Federation of the Blind from 1978 to 1981 which forced the FAA to modify those rules.

Since 1975, the number of court cases involving discrimination against handicapped travelers has multiplied many times. These cases have been harmful to the image of the travel industry, but they have been necessary because of the lack of adequate Federal regulations and enforcement, as well as the lack of industrywide standards.

SATH strongly advocates the establishment of a committee representing the travel industry, the handicapped community, Federal

regulatory agencies, and the Congress which could attempt to develop voluntary standards of service for handicapped travelers, and standards for training personnel in the travel industry. Either we are going to have that committee or we are going to have to have some legislation.

In the future, appropriate legislation to prevent discrimination against handicapped travelers may be necessary, but I think, first, we have got to make a good faith effort through voluntary standards, which would give us a chance to see whether they will work or not.

There is already in place, as we have discussed, a lot of legislation about handicapped people, and about air carriers. With the deregulation of the airline industry by Congress, thereby doing away with many Federal regulations, as well as doing away with the interline agreement about handicapped passengers—that agreement says that you can fly on a number of airlines on the same ticket, and that you are guaranteed to fly, if you are handicapped—both the airlines and handicapped travelers are faced with a void which must be filled by either industry standards, or regulations, or legislation.

I am very grateful to Mr. McKinnon and others who have offered this afternoon to write letters to the major national air carriers who have refused to answer our letter of April 20, which was simply a request for information in order to write our brochure.

Many airlines in this country are doing fine things, and we want to put those in the brochure, but we can't do it unless the airlines want to cooperate with us and give us basic information. I hope that this subcommittee will also work with us to make darn sure that the airlines give us the information we need to provide to the traveling handicapped public.

Finally, we believe that the travel industry has come a long way in making its facilities, vehicles, and aircraft more available and accessible to handicapped travelers. There are thousands of accessible hotel rooms in the United States. The Boeing 767 aircraft is accessible to wheelchair passengers. Blind passengers may keep their canes with them while flying, and bus companies are doing a better job of marketing their product to the handicapped travelers.

Tour companies and travel agents across the country are beginning to find that the handicapped travel market is commercially lucrative. In the audience today, we have Mrs. Joan Diamond, the vice president of the Society for Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, from Los Angeles. She is a travel agent with Valley Oaks Travel, and she works exclusively in marketing travel and tourism to the handicapped people. She is a real expert in the field.

The travel industry is slowly learning that only one-half million or fewer out of 35 million handicapped Americans use wheelchairs on a regular basis. The travel industry is also learning that their personnel must be trained to work with handicapped travelers. Organizations of handicapped persons are holding large conventions with thousands of members traveling from every State, and I go to a good many of those conventions.

Major sightseeing attractions are opening their doors to the handicapped traveler. Disneyworld and EPCOT are excellent examples of a new facility that is completely accessible to handicapped

people. More and more handicapped Americans are learning through experience that they can enjoy the freedom of traveling along with their families and friends.

Mr. Chairman, it was my privilege for 3 years, from 1975 to 1978, to work as coordinator of programs for the handicapped at the National Air and Space Museum at the Smithsonian. One of the things that I learned from that experience was that the joy on the face of the blind child touching a piece of moonrock in that museum cannot be measured. You can't quantify that. That experience can take place only with the freedom to travel.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much for your excellent testimony. Indeed, your testimony was so comprehensive that many of my questions have been answered. But I would like to hear you expand on your comments about the two-for-one arrangements that are offered to permit handicapped travelers to be escorted by companions at no extra charge. I think many people would be surprised to learn that many handicapped people dislike these arrangements.

If I understand you correctly, you feel that these two-for-one fares represent a treatment of the symptoms rather than the underlying problem. Most handicapped travelers would prefer services that would enable them to travel, in your words, "with dignity and equality."

Dr. SNIDER. That is right.

Senator PRESSLER. You also mentioned that many travel companies, particularly airlines, cannot afford to offer two-for-one arrangements. Would you expand on your statement?

Dr. SNIDER. I will be glad to. At the 2-day seminar sponsored by USTTA and Society for Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped in February of last year, we had Mr. James Callery, who is vice president for marketing at Amtrak. He said that it was a real burden for Amtrak to go off and train its staff to work with handicapped travelers, because he had spent something like $6 billion making new equipment architecturally accessible, and revamping Amtrak stations around the country.

Then the Congress had imposed upon them the burden of having to give a 25-percent discount to handicapped people. He felt that he was getting a double whammy, and we agree with him. We think that handicapped people, yes, want accessible equipment and accessible stations, but most handicapped people want to pay their way. We don't think that the industry ought to get into the welfare business. We think that that is bad legislation and bad government.

If people want more money, they ought to get it from Social Security, or from State public assistance, and not out of the pockets of the travel agent, and the tour operator, and the air carrier, and the bus company. Because if you are going to expect the industry to move at all, and make its equipment more accessible and train its personnel, they have to be guaranteed a reasonable return on their investment, and that means paying at least the equal fare with everybody else.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much. If time would permit, we could have a dialog here for a long time.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF DR. HAROLD SNIDER, SOCIETY FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF TRAVEL FOR THE HANDICAPPED

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, Ladies and Gentleman: I am Dr. Harold Snider, the immediate past-president of the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, and also, currently president of Access for the Handicapped, Incorporated. This testimony is being presented by me on behalf of the officers and members of the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped. We would like to thank the committee for this opportunity to testify on issues of vital importance to handicapped Americans.

The Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped (S.A.T.H.) is a non-profit, tax-exempt, educational organization founded in 1975. S.A.T.H. has, as its members, travel agents and tour operators, hotel and airline executives, as well as handicapped persons themselves. Handicapped persons play a leadership role in S.A.T.H. along with their able-bodied colleagues. Over the last nine years, S.A.T.H. has held a variety of educational conferences in Orlando, Boston, Florence, Italy, Amsterdam, the Netherlands, Washington, D.C., Vienna, Austria, and Los Angeles. In 1981 and 1982, S.A.T.H. sponsored Congressional luncheons in co-operation with the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus. In February, 1983, S.A.T.H. sponored a two-day confernece with the U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration on improving and promoting travel and tourism opportunities for the handicapped. On November 7, 1983, S.A.T.H. presented a seminar on travel for the handicapped at the convention of the National Tour Association in Houston, Texas. Also at the National Tour Association convention in Houston, the executive Director of S.A.T.H., Mr. Murray Vidockler received the Travel Leader of the Year Award for his work on behalf of travel for the handicapped. Mr. Vidockler also serves as a member of the Advisory Board of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus. On November 9, 1983, Pace University, in New York City, and S.A.T.H. jointly sponsored a one-day seminar on travel for the handicapped. On February 16, 1984, S.A.T.H. co-sponsored a similar seminar with the New School for Social Research in New York. Over the last nine years, S.A.T.H. has been able to carefully analyze both the market potential and the possible problems which face handicapped travelers. We would like to briefly outline several of our concerns:

1. Several advocacy organizations of handicapped and elderly persons, such as the American Council of the Blind, continue to ask the Congress for legislation which would require airlines to permit a blind or handicapped passenger to travel with an able-bodied escort, at the discounted two-for-one fare. Public Law 95163 permitted airlines to give this discount, but made its application optional for each carrier. Subsequent legislation to deregulate the airline industry has nullified the effect of P.L. 95163. Most advocacy organizations of handicapped persons, including S.A.T.H. and the National Federation of the Blind (the oldest and largest organization of the blind in the United States) continue to oppose establishment or re-establishment of discounted air travel for handicapped persons as a class. We believe that handicapped travelers want service and not charity from the travel industry. We also believe that because of the economics of providing good service, the travel industry can ill-afford to give charity. It should be noted that, for obvious economic reasons, no airline has initiated discounted two-for-one fares for blind and handicapped persons. Therefore, S.A.T.H. opposes special discounts for the handicapped traveler. We believe that sufficient competition and discounted travel already exist within the industry. Furthermore, we believe that discounted travel for the handicapped can only lead to continued segregation and discrimination against the handicapped traveler. We urge the Congress not to pass laws which force the travel industry to give charity to the handicapped. Although there is great sympathy for the handicapped and there is a tendency to give discounts to low-income groups, we believe that most handicapped Americans would rather be treated with dignity and equality by the travel industry.

2. In 1977, the United States Travel and Tourism Administration (U.S.T.T.A.) produced a brochure titled "Travel Tips for the Handicapped." This brochure was the first government publication about travel for the handicapped. It contained vital resource information about transportation, accommodation and possible destinations for handicapped travelers in the United States. In 1982, the brochure went out of print, and by then, much of its information had become outdated. Since then, S.A.T.H. has worked closely with U.S.T.T.A. in answering correspondence requesting information about travel for handicapped persons. On February 23, 1984, S.A.T.H. submitted an unsolicited proposal to Mrs. Donna Tuttle, Under Secretary of Commerce for Tourism, for revision and rewriting of the brochure. Mrs. Tuttle accepted our proposal on March 8 and we received a purchase order for the work on

April 4. The new brochure will be entitled "The United States Welcomes Handicapped Visitors." It will not only include a complete revision of previous section, but will also include new sections on visa and customs regulations, legal protection, and emergency services for handicapped travelers. The new brochure is designed to help both handicapped visitors coming to the United States from overseas and handicapped Americans traveling within this country. Although U.S.T.T.A. is providing $5,000 for revision and rewriting of the brochure, I was informed by Mrs. Tuttle that funds were not available for typesetting and printing of the brochure. S.A.T.H. and U.S.T.T.A. have made a joint appeal to the private sector for corporate financial assistance. I am very pleased to be able to announce that Greyhound Corportion is donating $10,000 to S.A.T.H. for publication of the brochure. We are very grateful to Greyhound for their generous contribution. This project will serve as a model of cooperation between the government, the travel industry and the handicapped community. This cooperation between the public and the private sectors is but a small example of what can be done to assist handicapped travelers. S.A.T.H. anticipates that the brochure will be printed and ready for distribution by August 31. S.A.T.H. is very grateful to the National Tour Association and to the United Bus Owners of America for their help in locating a source of funding for the project.

3. S.A.T.H. has participated as an active member of the Advisory Board of the Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus of the U.S. House of Representatives since its beginning. We believe that our participation on the Caucus Advisory board has helped to make members of the House of Representatives aware of the needs of handicapped travelers. Our participation has also made us aware of pending legislation concerning the travel industry and how that legislation might affect handicapped travelers. We are aware that a similar Advisory Board on travel and Tourism has been at work here in the U.S. Senate. S.A.T.H. would be very interestd in participating in the work of that Advisory Board as a member. We would be grateful if you would give our request careful consideration as soon as it is possible to make new appointments to that Advisory Board.

4. According to the Federal Bureau of Health Statistics, there are over 35 million handicapped Americans. In a speech on July 6, 1983, before the annual national convention of the National Federation of the Blind, in Kansas City, Missouri, Mr. Martin Darity, Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Tourism Marketing, stated that handicapped Americans represented a potential market of over $30 billion a year for the travel and tourism industry. If these statistics are correct, we believe that insufficient research has been done to quantify the potential handicapped travel market. We know how many handicapped Americans there are, but we don't know how often they currently travel or what their potential propensity to travel would be if opportunities were improved. We do know that handicapped Americans are in general either unemployed or under-employed and that when they work their per capita income is often less than that of able-bodied workers. In order to justify future expenditures by the travel industry, we believe that urgent research is needed which will identify the handicapped travel market more clearly. For instance, we have no knowledge of how many handicapped Americans may hold and use credit cards for travel and leisure. To date, the credit card industry has been most unresponsive in meeting the needs of handicapped travelers. We strongly recommend the establishment of cooperative research projects between travel industry organizations and appropriate federal agencies such as the U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration, Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services and the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped of the Library of Congress.

5. One of the greatest difficulties facing the handicapped traveler is the lack of information about airports, hotels, sightseeing attractions and destinations. There is no single up-to-date source which can be consulted by handicapped travelers or their families which will give information about services and architectural accessibility. Access guides to many cities have been published in the last few years. But they are our of date almost as soon as they are published. With sufficient funding from the private sector and the Federal Government, it would be possible to establish and update a computerized data base with a toll-free number. This data base could serve both the individual handicapped traveler and their families, as well as travel agents and tour operators making arrangements for handicapped travelers. Since it is now possible for computers to communicate with each other, airline reservation services could tap this data base when making reservations for a handicapped traveler. Establishment of a national data base on travel information for the handicapped would also make it possible to promote tourism to the United States by handicapped persons from overseas, who could easily obtain information in advance of their trip. At present, the travel industry itself cannot identify or quantify the number, avail-

ability and location of accessible motel and hotel rooms, aircraft accessibility, and other kinds of important information essential to the handicapped traveler. S.A.T.H. wishes to coordinate the establishment of a computerized data base of information for the handicapped traveler. An interesting by-product of the establishment of such a data base of travel information for the handicapped, is that the gathering of information, data entry into the computer and giving the information over the phone could be done by handicapped employees, thus providing trained information specialists for the travel industry who are themselves handicapped.

6. The single greatest problem facing the handicapped traveler while traveling is the ignorance, prejudice and general lack of understanding of the needs of the handicapped traveler by personnel in the travel and tourism industry. This lack of adequate training results in harmful and unnecessary discrimination against the handicapped traveler. Several years ago, a flight attendant of Eastern Airlaines attempted to physically force me to sit on a blanket, stating that it was a federal regulation that blind and handicapped passengers had to sit on blankets because they were incontinent and could not control their bladders. I told the Eastern flight attendant that urination had nothing to do with my blindness. I subsequetly took legal action against Eastern Airlines and reached an out of court settlemant. Similarly, while traveling, I often take along a Braille edition of Playboy magazine. On discovering that I was reading Playboy in Braille, two flight attendants from different airlines recently said that they were surprised that blind people were interested in sex. In January, 1984, while flying to Florida on Piedmont Airlines, I was approched by a Piedmont employee who put his hands on my shoulders and screamed in left ear, "We are going to put you on the plane now". I informed him that no on was putting me any where, and that I was paying for my ticket, just like everyone else, and that I would get on the airplane when and if I pleased, by myself. Such callous, insensitive and downright rude treatment is, unfortunately, a regular occurrence. Agencies, such as the Federal Aviation Administration, have been guilty of rulemaking which discriminates against blind passengers, regarding the rights of blind passengers to keep their white canes with them while flying. Because of a lawsuit, by the National Federation of the Blind, the F.A.A., in 1981, was forced to modify its rules so that blind passengers can now take their canes with them on airplanes. These are but a few personal examples of the treatment which I have encountered while traveling. Since 1975, the nunber of court cases involving discrimination against handicapped travelers has multiplied many times. These cases have been harmful to the image of the travel industry, but they have been necessary because of the lack of adequate federal regulations and enforcement, as well as the lack of industry-wide standards. S.A.T.H. strongly advocates the establishment of a committee representing the travel industry, the handicapped community, federal regulatory agencies and the Congress, which could attempt to develop voluntary standards of service for handicapped travelers and standards for training or personnel in the travel industry. In the future, appropriate legislation to prevent discrimination against handicapped travelers may be necessary, but a good faith effort, through volutary standards, should be given a chance to work, With the deregulation of the airline industry by Congress, thereby doing away with many federal regulations, as well as doing away with the inter-line agreement about handicapped passengers, both the airlines and handicapped travelers are faced with a void which must be filled by either industry standards, other regulations, or legislation.

7. In doing the research and writing for the brochure, "The United States Welcomes Handicapped Visitors" (previously discussed in point two). S.A.T.H. has had an excellent response from a vast majority of the travel industry. We are very grateful to the Travel Industry Association of America for the use of its mailing list. On April 20, 1984, I wrote to all of the major suppliers in the travel industry requesting both published and unpublished information about their policies and services for handicapped travelers. We have received excellent responses from tour operators, hotel chains, attractions, convention and visitors bureaus, bus companies, cruise lines and railroads. However, we have had an extremely poor response from airlines. We have had excellent responses from the newer, smaller and more competitive airlines, but we have received no response from the major well-established airlines. Many major air carriers provide excellent service to handicapped passengers. I wonder why they are afraid to respond to a simple request for information. As a result of this hearing, it would be very helpful if this subcommittee could help S.A.T.H. to gather basic information about services, facilities, and the corporate policies of the major U.S. air carriers.

Finally, we believe that the travel industry has come a long way in making facilities, vehicles, and aircraft more available and accessible to handicapped travelers. There are thousands of accessible hotel rooms in the United States. The Boeing 767

aircraft is accessible to wheelchair passengers. Blind passengers may keep their canes with them while flying and bus companies are doing a better job of marketing their product to the handicapped traveler. Tour companies and travel agents across the country are beginning to find that the handicapped travel market is commercially lucrative. The travel industry is slowly learning that only one-half million, out of 35 million handicapped Americans, use wheelchairs. The travel industry is also learning that personnel must be trained to work with handicapped travelers. Organizations of handicapped persons are holding large conventions with thousands of members traveling from every state. Major sightseeing attractions are opening their doors to the handicapped traveler. More and more handicapped Americans are learning through experience that they can enjoy the freedom of traveling along with their family and friends. The joy on the face of the blind child touching a piece of moon rock in the Smithsonian cannot be measured, and that experience cannot take place without travel.

Mr. Chairman, we request that the preceding statement be made a permanent part of the record of this hearing. Again, we would like to thank you and this committee for the opportunity to present testimony to you about improving travel and tourism opportunities for handicapped persons.

Senator PRESSLER. I want to call the bus company panel forward. The American Bus Association, Norman Sherlock; Greyhound, George Snyder; National Tour Association, Bruce Beckham; and the United Bus Owners of America, Paul Nagle.

I thank them for being here and for waiting so patiently. It has been a busy day over on the floor, and I understand that we are going to have a series of votes starting sometime between 5:30 and 6:30. We hope that they won't start earlier, because once they start, I will probably be gone for at least 45 minutes. So if we can do anything to expedite and summarize, we would much appreciate it.

I shall call first on Norman Sherlock, who is a good friend of the American Bus Association.

STATEMENT OF NORMAN SHERLOCK, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION

Mr. SHERLOCK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

For the record, my name is Norman Sherlock, president of the American Bus Association, which has about 3,500 members engaged in motor coach tour and charter travel work, just about every phase of tourism. Some of your favorite entities belong to this association, including the State of South Dakota, Mount Rushmore, and Jackrabbit Lines.

My points will be few in keeping with your wish. The industry has responded generally to the needs of handicapped travelers in several ways. First, by helping them to travel routinely in regular scheduled service or in tours and charters. Second, by fashioning special means to provide for travel by the handicapped. We stand ready as an association to be of whatever assistance we can in order to find feasible and practical solutions to the problems of travel by the handicapped.

Finally, we believe that if it would be determined that there is a need for accessibility on a nationwide scale, that there would be a need for a partnership effort in a Federal program involving some funding in order for bus companies to comply fully with that type of requirement. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF NORMAN R. SHERLOCK, PRESIDENT AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AMERICAN BUS ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: I appreciate this opportunity to explain the interest of the American Bus Association and its members in the transportation of handicapped persons.

The American Bus Association has some 3500 members throughout the country. These include intercity bus companies, tour organizers, state offices of tourism, local convention and visitors bureaus, hotels and motels, theme parks, museums, sightseeing services, restaurants, and other travel destinations.

The intercity bus industry has worked diligently to broaden travel opportunities for the elderly and for others who are transportation disadvantaged. One-half of all bus trips are taken by persons either under the age of 18 or over 65 and more than half by members of a family having an annual income of less than $15,000.[1]

The industry long has been interested in the travel needs of the handicapped and is always ready to learn what current needs and demands are. Much has been done and more can be done as these needs are voiced.

Some carriers have modified one or more coaches so that persons who are confined to a wheelchair may travel with a charter or tour group. One of our member operators in California has a number of accessible vehicles including a charter bus equipped with a lift that is used several times a week, a large school bus that is lift equipped and available for groups on weekends, and 50 vans equipped for wheelchairs and in use almost every weekend.

These modifications are, of course, voluntary since these are private companies who do not receive federal funds and, therefore, are not required by law to provide accessible transportation.

Our industry is not at this time seeking federal funds for our efforts in providing transportation for the handicapped. However, if it were determined that there is a need for accessible intercity service on a large scale, a partnership between the federal government and the private sector might be warranted. We do believe that with technical assistance funds, we could provide this service more economically and efficiently than the publicly-owned bus operators. Perhaps, Mr. Chairman, a study as to the demand and needs for further development and implementation of equipment, as well as training of personnel, could be undertaken. Certainly, we stand ready to be of whatever assistance we can so long as it is feasible and practical within the confines of the industry.

Intercity bus operators voluntarily provide free transportation to attendants of handicapped and disabled person.[2] Because the driver is the only employee on a bus, handicapped persons who require the assistance of an attendant are not permitted to travel alone. Free transportation is also provided for seeing-eye and hearing guide dogs accompanying blind and deaf persons.

Industry-supported ICC regulations providing that terminals shall be designed and constructed so that accommodations are accessible to handicapped, disabled, blind, and elderly passengers became effective on August 8, 1977.[3]

I thank you for the opportunity to provide this brief testimony in behalf of the American Bus Association and I look forward to working with you, Mr. Chairman, and your subcommittee on this subject in the future.

[The following information was subsequently received for the record:]

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR INOUYE AND THE ANSWERS THERETO

Question. I believe there is a notice of proposed rulemaking at the ICC, which has been outstanding since 1979, that is concerned with motor carrier accommodations for the handicapped.

What are your views on these proposed rules, and should they be adopted?

Answer. A Notice of Proposed Rulemaking to modify Ex Parte No. MC-95 (Sub-No. 3), Regulations Governing the Adequacy of Intercity Motor Common Carrier Passenger Service, was issued September 6, 1979, and still is pending.

Section 1063.8 deals with transportation of handicapped, disabled, blind, and elderly persons. It proposes that seeing-eye dogs accompanying handicapped persons shall be allowed free transportation. Although the regulation has not been adopted,

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[1] *The Intercity Bus Industry*, ICC Office of Transportation Analysis (January 1984) 17-20.
[2] NBTA Local and Reduced Fare Circular A-75-B.
[3] 49 CFR 1063.8(c).

intercity bus operators already provide for such free transportation in the National Passenger Traffic Association (NBTA), the bus industry rate bureau.

Further, 1063.8 proposes that handicapped persons who require the assistance of an attendant shall not be denied transportation so long as they are accompanied by an attendant. Intercity bus operators not only agree with this but they do provide free transportation to attendants of handicapped and disabled persons (NBTA Local and Reduced Fare Circular A-75-B).

ABA supports adoption of the proposed rules not only on the basis of their substance, but also so that regulations requiring assistance to handicapped persons will be uniform as between the bus and rail modes. Similar regulations have been promulgated by the ICC and adopted by DOT for rail carriers subject to its jurisdiction.

Question. It has been suggested that there is need for the establishment of a computerized data base with a toll-free number to give the handicapped traveler information about airports, hotels, destinations, and sightseeing attractions.

Some years ago I believe the travel service did have a multi-lingual nationwide toll-free information service with respect to tourism throughout the U.S. (travel phone USA). That program was discontinued for lack of funds, although at the time I believe it cost the travel service about $250 thousand.

With USTTA's increased budget, does the ABA think it a good idea to reinstitute that program, and also include information for the handicapped traveler?

Answer. ABA considers the establishment of a computerized data base with a toll-free number for handicapped travelers to be an important priority. However, we do not think that it is a particularly good use of some $250,000 of the current USTTA funds. We believe the idea does have a great deal of merit only if the USTTA's budget were increased substantially.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much.

Next I will call on Greyhound's able representative, George Snyder.

STATEMENT OF GEORGE T. SNYDER, JR., GREYHOUND LINES, INC.

Mr. SNYDER. My name is George Snyder. On behalf of Greyhound Lines, Inc., I welcome the opportunity to share our perspective on travel for the handicapped.

Historically, the intercity bus industry, including Greyhound, had certain basic programs designed to make travel available to the handicapped. Typical were provisions allowing guide dogs to travel with the blind, and subsequently the hearing impaired.

Clearly, the handicapped are traveling more. The economics of this market provide a clear inducement for segments of the tour and travel industry to improve and expand programs for the handicapped.

In October 1975, Greyhound established a unique program which we called our "Helping Hand Service," recognizing that many handicapped persons can only travel with a companion, and that the added cost of the companion could deter travel. We established a program which allows the companion to travel free on Greyhound buses. Thus two people travel for the price of one.

As a test, in 1980, Greyhound established a toll free nationwide telephone information service for the hearing impaired. The 7 million hearing impaired with access to TDD-TTY equipment can now communicate with Greyhound. As a result, after 3 years of testing, we will incorporate our silent information service as part of our Helping Hand Program in 1984.

For many years, Greyhound has built and remodeled terminals with a strong emphasis on the needs of handicapped travelers. In order to improve accessibility to our buses to those with mobility limitations, we have installed a retractable step on all of our buses

manufactured in recent years. In addition to assist our passengers, we have installed grab handles on both sides of the entry door.

Greyhound is committed to improving its service for the handicapped traveler. Not only are the handicapped entitled to service, it also makes good business sense. We stand ready to work with this committee, the handicapped, and the travel and tourism industry to make travel more available. Thank you.

[The statement follows:]

GEORGE T. SNYDER, JR., ASSISTANT TO THE VICE PRESIDENT-GOVERNMENT RELATIONS, GREYHOUND LINES, INC.

Mr. Chairman and members of the subcommittee: My name is George Snyder. On behalf of Greyhound Lines, Inc., I welcome the opportunity to share our perspective on travel for the handicapped. During the past 26 years I have held various managerial positions at Greyhound including operations, industrial relations, personnel, training and government relations.

Greyhound provides intercity passenger bus service in the 48 contiguous States and the District of Columbia. This includes regular route scheduled service of approximately 1 million miles per day transporting 45 to 50 million passengers annually. Greyhound also provides charter bus transportation to groups and tour operators. The latter services involve approximately 10 million passengers annually.

Historically, the intercity bus industry, including Greyhound, had certain basic programs designed to make travel available to the handicapped. Typical were provisions allowing guide dogs to travel with the blind and subsequently the hearing impaired.

In recent years Greyhound, not unlike other travel businesses and business generally, has become more familiar with the needs of the handicapped traveler and methods of meeting these needs. Clearly the handicapped are traveling more. They represent a market of tens of millions of potential travelers which the bus industry can serve if the appropriate programs are implemented. The economics of this market provide a clear inducement for segments of the tour and travel industry to improve and expand programs for the handicapped. What we at Greyhound have done in this regard I will describe in a moment. First though I want to note that each segment of the tour and travel industry is part of an integrated and complex whole. Unless each segment possesses information on the handicapped capabilities of the others, a serious barrier exists. We subscribe to the suggestions of the National Tour Association and others that improved information collection and dissemination is necessary.

GREYHOUND'S HELPING HAND SERVICE

In October of 1975, Greyhound established a unique program which we called our "helping hand" service. Recognizing that many handicapped persons can only travel with a companion and that the added cost of the companion could deter travel, we established a program which allows the companion to travel free on Greyhound buses. Thus two people travel for the price of one. To qualify, the handicapped person simply presents a written statement from a doctor, stating that the person needs a companion for physical assistance in bus travel (in fact we provide a form letter a physician can use). The Helping Hand Program and various suggestions for the handicapped traveler are described in a brochure that Greyhound has prepared and distributed widely—I have attached a copy of a recent brochure which is typical of those we have used during the life of the program. (Retained in committee files.)

As a necessary part of this program, Greyhound transports non-motorized wheelchairs at no charge. We also have wheelchairs available at most terminals for the use of our customers.

TTY—GREYHOUNDS SILENT INFORMATION SERVICE

As a test, in 1980, Greyhound established a toll free nationwide Telephone information service for the hearing impaired. Using TDD/TTY equipment, which resembles a portable typewriter except it has a small electronic screen to display a typed message, the 7,000,000 hearing impaired with access to TDD/TTY equipment can now communicate with Greyhound. Specially trained operators and three inbound toll free lines mean this segment of the handicapped population can obtain information on all Greyhound services. I have attached a copy of a brochure which more

fully describes this service. (Retained in committee files.) As a result of our 3 years of testing we will incorporate our silent information service as part of our helping hand program in 1984.

TERMINAL ACCESS

For many years Greyhound has built and remodeled terminals with a strong emphasis on the needs of handicapped travelers. For this endeavor we have been guided by the "specifications for making buildings and facilities accessible to, and useable by the physically handicapped" issued by the American National Standards Institute, Inc., in 1961, and the subsequent guidelines of the U.S. Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board.

RETRACTABLE STEP

In order to improve accessibility to our buses for those with mobility limitations, we have installed a retractable step on all of our buses manufactured in recent years. This has reduced the distance from ground level to the first step by almost 50 percent. Without the retractable step, the first step is 15½ inches above ground level. The retractable step reduces this first step to 8 inches. In addition, to assist our passengers we have installed grab handles on both sides of the entry door. (See attached schematic.) (Retained in committee files.)

ANNOUNCEMENT

Greyhound Lines, Inc. thinks this is a fitting occasion to announce that it is committing actual expenses up to $10,000 for typesetting and printing of a brochure titled "The United States Welcomes Handicapped Visitors," which will be distributed world-wide by the U.S. Travel and Tourism Administration: The Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped and Greyhound Lines, Inc.

CONCLUSION

Greyhound is committed to improving its service for the handicapped traveler. Not only are the handicapped entitled to service, it also makes good business sense.

We stand ready to work with this committee, the handicapped, and the travel and tourism industry to make travel more available.

[The following information was subsequently received for the record:]

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR INOUYE AND THE ANSWERS THERETO

Question. I believe there is a notice of proposed rulemaking at the ICC, which has been outstanding since 1979, that is concerned with motor carrier accommodations for the handicapped.

What are your views on these proposed rules, and should they be adopted?

Answer. Grayhound Lines believes the proposed rules for accommodating the handicapped aboard motorcoaches are unnecessary and ignore the practical realities of bus operations, bus design, and the presence of only our employee—the driver—on the bus.

We believe that our "Helping Hand" programs address the need of the handicapped traveler.

Question. It has been suggested that there is need for the establishment of a computerized data base with a toll-free number to give the handicapped traveler information about airports, hotels, destinations, and sightseeing attractions.

Some years ago I believe the travel service did have a multi-lingual nationwide toll-free information service with respect to tourism throughout the U.S. (Travel Phone USA). That program was discontinued for lack of funds, although at the time I believe it cost the travel service about $250 thousand.

With your increased budget, would it be a good idea to reinstitute that program, and also include information for the handicapped traveler?

Answer. At this juncture we do not believe a definitive answer can be offered. We do believe the travel and tourism industry in conjunction with USTTA should investigate the feasibility and cost of such an information system.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much.

Next we will call on Bruce Beckham with the National Tour Association.

STATEMENT OF BRUCE BECKHAM, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT, NATIONAL TOUR ASSOCIATION

Mr. BECKHAM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Bruce Beckham. I am immediate past president of the National Tour Association, which is the domestic tour industry association in North America. The National Tour Association represents more than 430 tour operators who package and sell group travel, as well as more than 1,900 tour suppliers, including hotels, motels, airlines, restaurants, attractions, bus companies, sightseeing services, and other businesses.

It is with great pride that we address your subcommittee today to share some of our members' experiences in the area of travel for the handicapped. I promise that I will keep them brief. We are also very pleased to note that following the hearing on December 5, 1983, of the House Subcommittee on Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism, this constitutes the Congress' important first look at the specific relation between travel and the handicapped traveler.

The timing of today's hearing could not be more in step with current activities taking place. As you well know, this hearing is one of the many events taking place in Washington, DC, and across the Nation in celebration of National Tourism Week.

The handicapped are part of our 20th century mobile society in which travel is an integral component of work, study, and recreation. The Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped has estimated that the disabled travel segment of our population has 19 million people, and it has suggested that travel and tourism revenue generated by the handicapped equals $30 billion annually.

It is NTA's experience that tour operators can and do meet the needs of the handicapped. In an informal NTA survey of our tour operator members, we have established that many NTA members have served and continue to accommodate physically and mentally handicapped customers on their tours.

To share with the committee just a few of NTA members' experiences, permit me to cite Cottonland Tours from Memphis, TN, which conducts tours for visitors to Memphis, including wheelchair bound, hearing impaired, and visually impaired clients.

North American Tours of Lincoln, NE, has been working with the Lancaster County Office of Mental Retardation to arrange special trips.

Mobility Tours of Brooklyn, NY, provides custom travel service to local organizations of mentally retarded, physically disabled, blind, and deaf passengers.

It is a misconception to envision the handicapped as persons confined to a wheelchair, because the wheelchair bound number one-half million of the 35 million handicapped Americans. What travel and tourism suppliers seem to have overlooked in the past are handicapped travelers who are not wheelchair bound.

NTA believes that the economics of this potentially huge handicapped market is sufficient inducement for the tourism industry to improve and expand its services to the handicapped. Extrapolating from current demographic information, it is estimated that if only 20 percent of the handicapped would travel away from home for a

minimum of 5 days, at least an additional $6 billion could be generated annually, which works out to an additional 158,940 new jobs to assist in stimulating and strengthening our economy.

We have not come before your subcommittee today to argue for a new Federal program on travel for the handicapped. We seek no new funding programs, nor the inevitable Federal regulations, reporting requirements, and paperwork that is necessary accompaniment to Federal appropriations. It is NTA's philosophy that a cooperative effort between the Federal Government and the private sector can address many of the problems our society and Nation face today.

NTA believes that the travel and tourism industry in cooperation with the Federal Government could contribute to the disabled becoming frequent travels, with little change to the present programs at few, if any, additional costs to either the private sector or the Federal Government. The market potential is there. Equally important, in addition to the considerable economic benefits of promoting travel for the handicapped, our Nation as a whole reaps indisputable social benefits in integrating disabled citizens into the mainstream of travel and tourism.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak before you.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF R. BRUCE BECKHAM, IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT, NATIONAL TOUR ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee: My name is Bruce Beckham. I am the Immediate Past President of the National Tour Association, which is the domestic tour industry assocation in North America. NTA represents more than 430 tour operators who package and sell group travel, as well as more than 1,900 tour suppliers, including hotels, motels, airlines, restaurants, attractions, bus companies, sightseeing services, and other businesses. It is with great pride that we address your Subcommittee today to share some of our members' experiences in the area of travel for the handicapped, to explore the current travel environment in which handicapped travelers operate, and to suggest some areas of federal involvement and industry/government cooperation in advancing our nation's response to the disabled traveler.

This hearing, along with the December 5, 1983, House Subcommittee on Commerce, Transportation, and Tourism hearing, constitutes the Congress's important first look at the specific relation between travel and the handicapped traveler. The timing of today's hearing could not be more in step with current activities taking place. As you well know, this hearing is one of the many events taking place in Washington, D.C., and throughout the nation in celebration of National Tourism Week. It also represents yet another initiative in the realm of activities concerning the handicapped. For example, 1981 was designated as the "International Year of Disabled People." The years 1982–1992 have been named the "United Nation's Decade of Disabled Persons." The Administration has taken many initiatives in 1983, including the establishment of the President's Committee on Employment of the Handicapped and a Working Group on Handicapped Policy under the Cabinet Council on Human Resources. This last group has been charged with the examination of policy administered by the many agencies that have jurisdiction over programs that concern the disabled. In his statement of May 5, 1983, Vice President George Bush identified the Working Group's objectives of fashioning policy in ways that will "One, encourage care for the handicapped within the family and the community; Two, promote integration of the handicapped into schools, the workplace and all society; Three, foster independence and dignity in handicapped persons' lives."

NTA concurs with these goals and believes that they are applicable to the work that remains to be done in the realm of travel for the handicapped. The basic reality of the situation is that the handicapped do travel and are traveling more than ever. They are a part of our twentieth century mobile society in which travel is an intricate component of work, of study, and of recreation. The Society for the Ad-

vancement of Travel for the Handicapped (SATH) has estimated the disabled travel segment of our population as 19 million people, and has suggested that travel and tourism revenues generated by the handicapped equal $30 billion annually.

The handicapped are spending their travel dollars on both long and short trips, at destinations near and far. They want and need to be able to travel by airplane, bus, rail, cruise vessel, and car, and need restaurants, attractions, and related services wherever they travel. The handicapped segment of our society is made up of all age groups and draws from all socio-economic backgrounds. This wide range of age, social and economic factors translates to travel needs spanning the entire spectrum of travel services.

It is NTA's experience that tour operators can and do meet the needs of the handicapped. In an informal NTA survey of our tour operator members, we have established that many NTA members have served and continue to accommodate physically and mentally handicapped customers on their tours. We have found that these travelers usually are either self-sufficient or travel with a companion who cares for their special needs.

To share with the Subcommittee some of the experiences of different NTA members, let me cite several examples of NTA involvement in tours accommodating the handicapped. Cottonland Tours of Memphis, Tennessee, conducts tours for visitors to Memphis. This tour operation has adapted programs for wheelchairbound, hearing impaired, and visually impaired clients.

The Guide Service of Washington, D.C., provides guides who board buses coming to our nation's capital. Included in its training program is instruction for serving disabled clients.

North American Tours of Lincoln, Nebraska, is yet another company that has recognized the great potential the handicapped market offers tour operators. North American Tours has been working with the Lancaster County Office of Mental Retardation to arrange special group tours for the handicapped. Its first Hawaiian tour is set for November, 1984. Next year, North American Tours plans to organize a special tour to Europe. As a result of its experience, North American Tours has received a number of inquiries from several different states interested in the program North Amerian Tours has developed.

A fourth example of tour operators with services for the handicapped is Mobility Tours, a division of All State Tours of Brooklyn, New York. It has been operating since 1975 and provides a custom travel service for local organizations or community facilities for the mentally retarded, physically disabled, blind, and deaf. The tours vary from a day to a week long, to destinations in the Northeast, Canada, Florida, and New York State.

An interesting aspect of the Mobility Tour experience is its purchase of its own mini-motorcoach with a hydraulic lift to help wheelchair-bound passengers board the bus. The coach, which costs $48,000, will carry 20 passengers or, with the seats removed, abut 8 tied-down wheelchairs. This is a concrete example of NTA's view that tour operators can promote travel for the physically mobile disabled and, if the market proves viable, can choose to expand to the wheelchair-bound. It is a misconception to envision the handicapped as persons confined to wheelchairs, because they number only one-half million of the 35 million handicapped Americans. What travel and tourism service suppliers seem to have overlooked in the past in their marketing schemes are handicapped travelers who are not wheelchair-bound. Tour operators can and do meet the needs of the physically mobile travel groups without investing in expensive equipment or making major changes in programs.

NTA believes that the economics of this potentially huge handicapped market is sufficient inducement for the tourism industry to improve and expand its services to the handicapped. Extrapolating from current demographic information, it is estimated that if only 20 percent of the handicapped would travel away from home for a minimum of five days, at least an additional $6 billion would be generated annually. Since U.S. Travel Data Center statistics show that one new job is generated for every $37,750 spent on travel and tourism, these dollars would generate 158,940 new jobs and assist in stimulating and strengthening the economy. These statistics present a growing potential for handicapped travelers. Unfortunately, we do not know precisely how many of our handicapped citizens are traveling.

The federal government has been involved in many aspects of assisting the handicapped. This includes programs in education, employment, architectural barrier removal, and accessibility. We have not come before your Subcommittee today to argue for a new federal program for travel for the handicapped. We seek no new funding programs, nor the inevitable federal regulations, reporting requirements, and paperwork that necessarily accompany federal appropriations. It is NTA's philosophy that a cooperative effort between the federal government and the private

sector can address many of the problems our society and our nation face. In order to foster more travel community/federal government cooperation in the area of travel for the handicapped, NTA would like to advance several recommendations for possible federal involvement in the domain of existing funding programs for the handicapped.

The first recommendation that NTA would like to make is an identification of the handicapped and the problems they encounter while traveling. In order to solve or minimize these problems, the travel and tourism community needs information and statistics on the handicapped. Depending on the definition employed, from 11 to 15 percent of our population is considered to be handicapped. Each government agency dealing with the handicapped has a different definition of the handicapped. The data developed by one agency under one set of definitions is not always usable by other groups working under a different definition. NTA recommends, therefore, that the federal government's current data collection be coordinated among the different agencies administering programs for the handicapped and that the federal government expand its work in the identification and categorization of the handicapped population's make-up and travel problems. The availability of reliable data would assist the travel community in planning its services for the handicapped, as well as the federal government in the execution of its existing federal programs for the handicapped.

Secondly, there is a lack of accurate, up-to-date information on travel services and facilities for the handicapped and a lack of central information dissemination point. While many travel and tourism services are presently available and accessible to the handicapped, a data base of accessibility information to be used for making travel plans for the handicapped has never been developed. In response to this problem, NTA recommends federal government involvement in the preparation and compilation of information on travel opportunities for the handicapped.

A third problem lies in the existence of attitude, rather than architectural, barriers. Travel and tourism service providers and other tourists do not always understand the needs of the handicapped traveler or the fact that, aside from his disability, the handicapped person is traveling for exactly the same reasons as other travelers. The solution response lies in education programs, education materials, and repeated contact with the disabled. NTA's annual convention in Houston last November included seminars and panel discussions on travel for the handicapped to help NTA members learn about marketing services for the handicapped and exploring ways of improving facilities. At the federal level, the agencies involved can join with the private sector in a public awareness campaign. By assisting in the organization of an educational drive of this nature and by lending its weight to the program, the federal government can contribute to the dissolution of attitude barriers that limit the handicapped traveler.

A fourth area of response lies in the need to know what organizations, public and private, and what services are already in place to assist the handicapped. This information would enable the travel and tourism service providers to work with the existing network in accommodating the handicapped. The travel and tourism industry is by its nature a fragmented grouping of service providers. The industry does not have a centrum to coordinate and disseminate information on government and private opportunities available for the handicapped and those who seek to serve them. NTA believes that the federal government is best suited to pull this information together through either USTTA or one of the existing agencies that administer handicapped programs.

These four suggestions will go a long way in identifying our nation's handicapped, their strengths and needs, and the federal programs already in place. In order to bring federal involvement in travel down to a concrete benefit level for the handicapped, however, NTA would like to advocate a fifth solution response. NTA is convinced that there are many federal programs that could be expanded to include travel as an allowable expenditure of a handicapped person's federal assistance. This government initiative would result in a rise in the number of handicapped travelers, increasing the obvious economic benefits to the nation's economy and employment situation. The following three programs serve as an example of the possibilities that exist. We ask that these and others be examined by the appropriate Congressional forums:

1. *The Medicare and Medicaid Programs.*—Many handicapped people receiving Medicare and Medicaid benefits must travel in order to receive the medical therapy or medical treatment they need. Currently, these travel expenses are not reimbursable. NTA suggests that the Congress examine the possibility of making this legitimate travel expense reimbursable under Medicare and Medicaid.

2. *Office of Special Education Programs.*—The Office of Special Education provides grant monies to school districts and special project grantees for education programs for the handicapped. By including travel as one of the criteria for special education funding, the federal government would acknowledge the invaluable educational experience that travel can offer a handicapped child. For example, visually handicapped children could learn first-hand about our country's space program by traveling to the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C.

3. *The Small Business Administration's Handicapped Assistance Loan Program.*—This federal program assists the handicapped in securing loans used to set themselves up in a small business. There are many handicapped people who would like to become involved in a travel-related business; up until now, however, the guidelines of this program have not favored travel as a business venture area. NTA suggests that Congress may consider the feasibility of expanding the guidelines to include loans for those wanting to launch a travel-related business. As the handicapped become more involved in travel, they will increase the number of handicapped travelers by bringing new awareness of the needs of both the handicapped travelers and the travel service provider.

In the same way that J.S. Dusenbury, Chairman of the National Council on the Handicapped, identified the thrust of the Council's policy as one which "is to make disabled people independent livers," NTA believes that the travel and tourism industry, in cooperation with the federal government, could contribute to the disabled's becoming "independent travelers" with little change to the present programs at few, if any additional costs to either the private sector or to the government. The market potential is there. Equally important, in addition to the considerable economic benefits of promoting travel for the handicapped, our nation as a whole reaps indisputable social benefits in integrating our disabled citizens into the mainstream of travel and tourism.

Thank you.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much.

I shall now call upon Paul Nagle of the United Bus Owners Association.

STATEMENT OF PAUL NAGLE, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNITED BUS OWNERS OF AMERICA

Mr. NAGLE. Mr. Chairman, my name is Paul Nagle. I am assistant to the executive director of the United Bus Owners of America.

I share with Dr. Snider the delight that you have scheduled this hearing this week during National Tourism Week, instead of during some observance of handicapped activities. The United Bus Owners of America applaud you for having scheduled these hearings and having taken the positive stance that you have displayed in the matter.

We certainly share with you the opinion that retrofitting is not the answer. Section 16 in the Urban Mass Transportation Act is not exactly a thrilling thing for us to have observed, and we believe that it is up to the private sector to do what must be done in order to accomplish accommodation.

We believe that the industry has been undertaking this very thing. The National Tour Association, and the United Bus Owners of America have for several years had a series of activities designed to improve the accommodations of highway coaches to handle the problems of handicapped persons.

To the comments offered by Dr. Snider about what is observed now in new highway coaches, I would add also that we now have unbroken floors. There is a smooth ramp-style floor instead of a step-style floor in the interior of highway coaches.

Finally, with what Dr. Snider suggested in regard to what we should be doing in terms of planning for training programs for accommodating handicapped travelers, I believe that whether or not

the sort of committee that Dr. Snider envisaged is achieved that he will find that the next future time when a meeting of this sort takes place there will be on the record evidence that people at this table have been sitting down with persons like Dr. Snider, and that we have been working out the problems that face us all.

Thank you very much.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF PAUL NAGLE, ASSISTANT TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, UNITED BUS OWNERS OF AMERICA

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Business, Trade and Tourism Subcommittee: My name is Paul Nagle. I am assistant to the executive director of United Bus Owners of America, the largest bus industry association in the world. We enroll more than 2,000 bus owner members, ranging in size from Greyhound and Trailways on the one hand, to fleets of five or fewer buses; some with only one bus.

Throughout almost 15 years of service, UBOA's main purpose has been to save the small bus operator from extinction, even from self-destruction. For example, we encourage our members to carry insurance at levels four times higher than the mandatory coverages, currently in place. UBOA stipulates that in order to be eligible for UBOA's insurance plan, the applying carrier must demonstrate fitness and legitimacy; that there must be in place certificates of (or applications for) authority to provide the types of service a particular carrier is holding out to the public.

What has this to do with Travel for the Handicapped? It is the credo of UBOA that the bus industry must provide the types and degrees of service, coach travelers demand or those which they should be encouraged to desire.

For the past five years, a task force has been having down-to-earth discussions about the services, bus suppliers should offer, product changes that should be made. The National Tour Association and UBOA have met not only with bus manufacturers, but with parts and accessory suppliers, as well. A few weeks ago, we put one of the members in touch with every known manufacturer of wheelchair lifts and their associated technologies. Most pointedly, our discussions have featured close-knit talks with all the major manufacturers and distributors of highway coaches. Results were evident to persons attending our Expo and Seminar, just before Easter, at Nashville's Opryland hotel. Access and accommodations for the near-handicapped have become standard components of highway coach construction. The bus industry recognizes that senior citizens, many with varying degrees of handicap, are the single most faithful part of the group travel family. Bus manufacturers have come forward with innovative designs on such things as step- and door-mechanisms, seat widths, seat adaptabilities, paddings, etc. Thus, the manufacturers have demonstrated their determinations to make comfort and accessibility ever more attractive to the predominant component of the coach-riding public.

Testimony, today, by the National Tour Association names tour planners whose marketing programs go direct to the handicapped community. Activities, such as these in which UBOA is privileged to participate, today, will raise, further, the graph of rising concern for barriers which deter the handicapped traveler. UBOA prides ourselves on the degree to which members not only accept, but seek handicapped riders.

No news is good news. And so we consider that a successful solution has been found, when nothing further is heard from a previously unknown tour operator, who calls UBOA and asks for someone to transport a group of handicapped children in a distant city. We did it with three phone calls, a ridiculously easy process when it is reflected that ten calls often must be made in order to determine the cause of a billing error by a department store.

Several years ago, one of UBOA's founding members instituted a very innovative service for the handicapped. Three highway coaches were acquired, and outfitted with wheelchair lifts in the rear axle areas, beside restrooms which were made handicapped-accessible. Seats were removed to make place for three wheelchair tiedowns. The carrier would have arranged for more such tiedowns, but found that the handicapped travelers preferred to "mainstream;" that those who were able, wished to lift themselves from their wheelchairs, and to ride as non-handicapped passengers. Prior to making the expensive coach modifications, an extensive market survey indicated that there would be supportive travel by groups of handicapped persons. That traffic flow has not materialized. "Almost none," is the way Bill Allen of Amador Stage Lines, characterized the degree of density of traffic flow among organized groups of handicapped persons.

At the time of conversion, Amador conceived two more innovative schemes:

1. A terminal would be provided at a new location, San Francisco's Chinatown.
2. Scheduled service to and from Reno, Nevada, would be offered with highway coaches specially adapted for handicapped persons.

Thus, Amador sought to serve both a racial and an anatomical minority; to do so on a scheduled, advance reservation basis, a first, in itself.

Amador has now exited from the route because circumstances did not permit sustaining traffic to be generated.

Mr. Allen tells us that the segment between Chinatown/San Francisco and Sacramento did not, in its early stages, warrant operations South of California's Capital City. (Amador operates eight trips, daily, between Sacramento and Reno. Specially adapted coaches operate only on request.)

Amador is an innovative carrier; it has sought after handicapped traffic; might, by now, have brought profitability to the red-ink route from Chinatown to Reno, had it not been that the Interstate Commerce Commission ordered Amador to cease and desist from operating liftless coaches, whether or not advance reservations included requests for accommodation of the handicapped. Amador, quite simply, was not able to ignore possibilities for patronage by handicapped persons, other than from among individuals who might travel on the scheduled route. This is just one more strand by which the Interstate Commerce Commission is allowing the threadbare fabric of regulation to become unraveled.

One of the negative aspects of service to the elderly and handicapped is the reality that charlatans are ever ready to exploit the plight of others less fortunate than themselves. One such example involves the Interstate Commerce Commission and an application for operating authority to serve handicapped travelers and others, to and from points in seven Western States on the one hand, and points in the United States, on the other. Protestants to the application argued fraudulence upon its targeted constituency, handicapped persons. They said that the application was flawed; that no carrier (regardless of any degree of dedication to social betterment), would be able to stretch the capacities of one coverted MC-5 highway coach to serve a constituency spread across seven large States. Protestants argued that the application was simply a means whereby an applicant for operating authority might not necessarily lift any wheelchairs, but would certainly raise the lower edge of the regulatory net, controlling entry into interestate commerce; would make possible an award of authority to an applicant who, lacking the wheelchair ploy, would probably not have survived the tests, then prevaling for determining entry entitlement.

Mr. Chairman, the topic of today's hearing has been discussed with Bruce Main, UBOA's national safety director. Mr. Main is fully aware of the availability of technology to afford access by wheelchair-bound travelers to highway coaches. Mr. Main is also aware of the limited degree to which use is being made of the lifts currently in place on transit fleets. My concept of Mr. Main's view is that with a free marketplace enabling broader discretion (than those afforded to the public transit under Section 16 of the Urban Mass Transportation Act) we will see innovative installations of wheelchair lifts in luxury highway coaches. Having a motivation to explore psychological factors as well as those of mechanical safety devices, Mr. Main observes that we may encounter, among tour travelers, a subliminal resistance to the presence of a hospital device in a tour coach atmosphere.

Wayne J. Smith, UBOA's executive director, underscores a further conclusion of Mr. Main that earliest and greatest expansion of facilities for handicapped travelers may be expected to be the luxury mid-sized coach; bigger than a van, much safer, more comfortable, and approaching (as it does) in durability the characteristics of the full-size highway coach.

Mr. Smith notes that, both within and beyond the community of handicapped travelers, the mid-sized coach or mini-bus is literally exploding on the travel scene. He points out that, at UBOA's April Expo in Nashville, a wide variety of sleekly sub-sized highway equipment was arrayed beside positively gorgeous tour buses.

Reference has been made, Mr. Chairman, to the use of lifts in public transit. A familiar phenomenon is the "Dial-a-Ride" concept where vehicles, more personal than a transit bus, are used to serve that segment of the public which has specialized travel needs. Some UBOA members, currently, provide such services signal, the danger being that narrow-based "non-profit" providers of specialized transportation will discourage free-market entry into the field.

In King County, Washington, a few days ago, a "non-profit" provider, Multi-Media (an offshoot of the VANGO operation in nearby Maryland) failed to reach competitive status in a bid to provide specific transportation to elderly and handicapped persons. The person in charge of that undertaking, told me that there would be three components in its bid; (1) expenses; (2) driver salaries; and (3) amortization of

vehicular lease costs. A for-profit carrier, currently holding such a contract, confirms that Multi-Media does provide services which, commercially, are not feasible. Three dangers, immediately, are perceptible:

1. To the extent that non-profit providers invade the service market, the tax base is eroded.

2. To the degree that there are finite limits to the available number of genuine non-profit providers, the needs of the marketplace will not, universally, be met.

3. To the point beyond which true non-profit participation may not, rationally, be projected, dependency upon non-profit providers becomes a hazard to an honest marketplace.

Accordingly, Mr. Chairman, UBOA concludes:

1. Notwithstanding greater susceptibility by handicapped persons to the discomforts of travel, riding qualities and passenger accommodations of highway coaches have now improved to so great a degree that handicapped persons (including some whose discomforts may be aggravated by movement) may reasonably anticipate long-distance travel by highway coach, especially when such coaches are dedicated to charter or tour movement.

2. Technology for accommodating wheelchair-bound travelers is now available and affordable for highway coaches.

3. Deregulation of the bus industry, inevitably, will increase marketing efforts to be directed to the handicapped community, just as now, extensive marketing emphasis is placed upon attracting tour or charter movements made up of senior citizens.

4. With astonishingly broad changes having been made to accommodate handicapped persons in hotels and other public places, the only lingering barrier of any size in the path of the handicapped person is the matter of access to the travel destination.

5. With all other signs being affirmative, UBOA suggests that the travel-access barrier is now about to topple; that we face a sunburst of opportunity for the traditionally immobilized person to achieve mobility.

Mr. Chairman, we add just one further thing. While the performance of the Interstate Commerce Commission, only tangentially, is relevant to today's discussion, we urge your support for legislation such as that in the Packwood bill, S. 48, to sunset the Interstate Commerce Commission. The Commission's brand of regulation is an idea whose time is past. Examples cited in this testimony reveal that the Commission has impeded those who seek, earnestly, to advance the cause of handicapped travelers; that conversely, the Commission has turned a deaf ear to those who have argued that among applicants who hold out token accommodation to the handicapped community, not all seek to lift the wheelchair-bound person to the travel floor of true mobility.

Mr. Chairman, UBOA appreciates the opportunity to appear before you, today. We extend the earnest hopes that the results of your undertaking will be to implement the high intentions with which the undertaking was begun.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much. I appreciate all of you waiting so long, and for your testimony. I appreciate your brevity and your entire remarks shall be placed in the record.

Some of you noted that there are great differences among the regulations to which various segments of the bus industry are subject. As a result there are differences in accessibility of various bus lines. There is a clear need for better information about the accessibility of buses.

Assuming that all of you support the organization of information about bus accessibility, how will the bus industry facilitate the creation of a central information source?

Does anybody volunteer on that?

Mr. SHERLOCK. Perhaps the organizations could get together and come up with some common funding procedure and some common mechanism whereby there would be a single reference point rather than separate organizations going it alone. There are many times when it is far better for associations to cooperate in such matters.

Mr. NAGLE. Agreed.

Mr. BECKHAM. Agreed.

Mr. SNYDER. I also agree.

Senator PRESSLER. Fine.

In your testimony, you all cited the efforts that the bus industry has made to make buses more accessible to disabled travelers. Certainly these efforts have enabled many handicapped persons to travel much more extensively than in the past.

Turning to the social aspect of travel for the handicapped, what efforts has the bus industry undertaken to make its employees more sensitive to the needs of handicapped travelers?

Mr. SNYDER. Continuous training on behalf of Greyhound with all of its employees is no different than probably any other company in trying to sensitize the employee. If you have a passenger who goes to the ticket counter who is someone who is hearing impaired, and he gets a ticket and he is instructed to go to gate 15. He then ends at gate 15, and the dispatcher has decided to dispatch the bus from gate No. 2, that hearing impaired individual is not going to know that there has been a change. So it is important that he be recognized as having the need to be redirected to the proper gate.

So we have to sensitize the employees to ensure that when they get someone who is handicapped, who perhaps is traveling alone, depending upon whatever type of handicap he has, that he is treated with a sense of dignity and respect that he should be, but at the same time not inconvenienced as a result of a lack of someone not caring to see that he is directed to the proper location.

Senator PRESSLER. Do any of the others have comments?

[No response.]

Senator PRESSLER. All right. We thank you very much for being here. I apologize again for your long wait.

Let me now call on our last witness, Dr. Kahn, on behalf of the American Psychological Association. We very much appreciate your presence. We are sorry that you have had to wait so long.

STATEMENT OF DR. ARNOLD KAHN ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Dr. KAHN. Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for the opportunity to speak today about travel and the handicapped.

My name is Arnold Kahn, and I am the administrative officer for social and ethical responsibility at the national office of the American Psychological Association.

I will depart from my prepared remarks and just briefly summarize our program for the handicapped at convention. I would also like to request permission to submit, for the record, additional statements from experts, who themselves could not be here today because of the press of time.

We were asked by physically disabled members of our association to make the annual convention we hold accessible to them. When we told them that we printed which rooms were accessible, and which restaurants were accessible, they said that it wasn't enough, that we, in addition, had to make the convention socially acceptable. No matter how well a person can get into a building, sleep and eat, if they are not made to feel comfortable, if they are not made to feel that it is a convenience, then the trip just is not worthwhile for them.

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We have taken a number of steps to ensure the social accessibility of hotels and restaurants where we hold our conventions.

Briefly, I attend the convention site ahead of time and meet with the staff at each hotel. I hold very brief training sessions, lasting about 30 minutes. In these sessions, I try to help dispel myths and provide information which members of the hotel staffs lack. I give them information about interacting with a person with a disability. This includes asking if he or she needs help, not assuming help is or is not needed; to never grab a wheelchair without first asking; how to talk with a deaf person, such as not putting your hand in front of your mouth; not shouting at someone with a visual impairment, they can hear fine, they just can't see; and a number of additional pieces of advice and information.

Following that, I pass out a very brief guide to working with the handicapped, which is given to each member of the hotel staff—we have them available both in English and Spanish—so that they can refer to it if they have further questions or they forget something.

Finally, I want to mention that during the convention, my office staffs what we call a handicapped resource room. We have a TTY available for the deaf to make phone calls, and our convention program is available on audio tape. We have interpreters present to attend programs with deaf members and sign for them. We have volunteers available to read, push wheelchairs, and do whatever is necessary. In addition, we have equipment to make small wheelchair repairs.

We find that removing the social barriers in this way is a very inexpensive thing to do, an inexpensive way to encourage the physically disabled members of our association to attend the convention. Attendance has increased dramatically in recent years as a result.

We feel, furthermore, that tourism offices, local chambers of commerce, hotel groups, boards of trade, and similar groups, could institute the same kinds of training programs and we would be glad to work with them in this kind of endeavor.

I thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today.

Senator PRESSLER. Thank you very much. I think you provide a unique point of view, and you are in a unique position to make judgments here.

I am pleased to hear you echo some of the sentiments about social barriers encountered by the handicapped. I agree with your assessment that the source of frustration is often social rather than physical. Social barriers can be removed at much less cost than physical barriers. A fine example is the service that APA provides for members with disabilities.

Does APA have specific personnel who specialize in providing for the needs of handicapped members at the convention?

Dr. KAHN. The only special training is really for interpretors to translate sessions into American sign language for those with hearing impairments. Otherwise, we found that my own staff, who has not had particular training, can very easily accommodate the needs. If a person with a visual impairment needs somebody to read a paper to him or her, that can be done with very little training. Most of the problems are problems of sensitivity, not special training.

Senator PRESSLER. I think that psychologists are uniquely qualified to educate people on the social aspects of travel for the handicapped. Would APA, on request, conduct seminars for employees of the travel industry?

Dr. KAHN. I believe that could be arranged very easily. I suspect that we might even be able to make video tapes for training sessions so that people wouldn't have to physically be there to do it all the time.

Senator PRESSLER. I think earlier in Senator Inouye's statement, the therapeutic value of travel was mentioned. What is that, and how does that affect any person, whether they are handicapped or not.

Dr. KAHN. Quite simply, the stress and fatigue of the hassle of everyday life, and the boredom also of the repetition of the normal workday, can lead to lower productivity, as well as poor mental health. Everyone needs a vacation, needs to get away. It means more than just simply taking a few days off work. A change of environment leads to a new schedule, it helps the body to recuperate and the mind to become refreshed. Individuals with disabilities need such vacations and such relaxation as much as do able-bodied citizens.

Senator PRESSLER. Does the minority have any additional question?

We do have some additional questions in writing. We thank you very much.

[The statement follows:]

STATEMENT OF DR. ARNOLD KAHN, ON BEHALF OF THE AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today about travel opportunities for the handicapped. This is a very important subject that affects the well-being of persons who have physical disabilities. In addition, difficulties in this area can deprive the broader society of a significant number of its members whose disabilities are extraneous to the positive contributions they might make.

My name is Arnold Kahn. I am a social psychologist and the Administrative Officer for Social and Ethical Responsibility at the national office of the American Psychological Association. My office is responsible for ensuring accessibility of all APA's activities to members with disabilities and inclusion of these members in the Association's governance structure. The APA represents over 72,000 psychologists, including nearly 2,500 who report a physical disability.

Our nation does not have a policy for leisure time activities. Because of this, we spend very little time looking systematically at how people use their leisure time, although work in psychology shows that the stress and fatigue of everyday work are greatly relieved by recreational activity.

A policy for leisure time activities should include attention to the needs of persons with disabilities. The physically impaired person, no less than any other citizen, needs the mental health benefits recreational activities provide. The extent to which such activities are readily available to them has repercussions on their lives and affects other citizens as well. I would like to clarify for the Committee that, due to the press of time, we were unable to have here a person who specializes in this area. For that reason, I would like to request the Committee's permission to submit for the record an additional statement from these experts.

I would like to take as a example of what can be done and what needs to be done, the commitment of the American Psychological Association to make the activities of the Association accessible to all its members. Accessibility, in the view of the association, includes social as well as physical access. Let me explain the distinction by describing what the APA does to make its annual convention accessible to its members with physical handicaps. I use the annual convention as an example because it illustrates the steps that can be taken to allow individuals with impairments to

travel and it also will reveal additional measures which need to be implemented if people with disabilities are to increase their travel.

Prior to the convention, each hotel is surveyed by the convention manager and persons with disabilities to note physical accessibility. Wheelchair accessible entrances, restrooms, restaurants, and rooms are noted. All convention registration materials include this information in detail, which serves to inform members with disabilities where it is possible for them to stay—basically, where it is physically possible for them to sleep and eat.

But having a place where basic needs of food and shelter are possible does not ensure the trip will be convenient, comfortable, or worth taking. A physically accessible environment is only half the battle; the environment must also be socially accessible. People with impairments, like all people, want to be treated with respect, dignity, and humanity. This means the general public must be educated as to how to interact with a person with a handicap so that the person with the handicap does not feel demeaned and degraded.

To accomplish this, the APA first sends a member of their staff to the convention site to train hotel workers about how to interact with persons with disabilities. This education program is really quite simple, but it provides those individuals who will come into contact with persons with impairments with information they do not currently have, such as:

Do not shout at visually impaired individuals; they can hear fine, they just cannot see;

Make sure you do not cover your mouth when speaking to a person with a hearing impairment;

Never grab a person's wheelchair without asking;

Never assume that help is needed or that help is not needed. Always ask;

Do not ask another person about the needs of an impaired person; talk to that person directly: "Do you take cream in your coffee?" rather than "Does she take cream in her coffee?" and

When registering a person in wheelchair, have a clipboard available and bring the forms to be filled out to the person.

By providing this service to the hotel staffs, they feel better prepared to provide the quality of service they would like to give all guests.

Another thing the APA does is have a handicapped resource room at the annual convention. This is a place where members with disabilities can receive service that is not available elsewhere. The convention program is available on tape; interpreters are available to sign sessions for the hearing impaired; and volunteers are available to push wheelchairs, read to the visually impaired, and take care of other needs as they arise. A TTY is available for the deaf as well as coffee, a place to rest, and friendly conversation.

A result of this effort is that more and more psychologists with disabilities are attending our annual convention and enjoying it. And still more might attend if it were not for additional barriers, both physical and social, which are placed in the path of the person with a handicap who attempts to travel to the city where the convention is held. Airlines, trains, taxis, buses—the modes of transportation necessary to arrive in the convention city, are often physically, and frequently socially, inaccessible. For example, airplane isles are not sufficiently wide for wheelchair use and the person who uses a wheelchair cannot function independently; people with visual impairments are often forced to sit in the front row and deprived of choosing their preferred seat; employers are not always trained to be sensitive to the needs of persons with disabilities.

Research has shown that frustration frequently leads to anger and aggression. When the source of the frustration cannot be eliminated, a person finally stops trying. This has enormous implications on the mental well being of a handicapped person. Physical barriers to transportation are sometimes expensive to eliminate, although the gain to society usually more than offsets the costs. By contrast, when the source of frustration is social in nature—that people are uncooperative, unconcerned, or unknowledgeable—then the amount of frustration experienced is much higher. Yet, ironically, the cost of removal of the social barrier is much lower. Frustration is higher because the person with an impairment knows that the barrier could be removed through education. He or she knows that it is simply another human being who is standing in the way of accessibility, not a curb without a cutaway, not an elevator with auditory signal of what floor one is on, but a person who is unaware and uninformed.

Therefore, I urge you to consider, along with all the needed changes in the physical environment, programs to educate the public about the social barriers they erect for the persons with disabilities.

We would like to suggest the following activities that could be undertaken to meet some of these goals:

Local tourism offices could sponsor training sessions with tourism facilities to promote a better understanding of the needs of handicapped persons, such as APA does with the hotel staff where we hold conventions. Because of our experience in this regard, we can say with confidence that not all large facilities that cater to convention groups, have this type of training available to their staff. Likewise, hotel groups, boards of trade, or local Chambers of Commerce could put together similar training sessions, publish information brochures on locally available resources, and generally promote sensitivity to this subject. In addition, transportation companies should have consistent orientation sessions of this kind for their employees. We are aware that numerous airlines do this now but we do not know if there is a general policy in this regard.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present our views on this subject. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

[The following information was subsequently received for the record:]

QUESTIONS OF SENATOR PRESSLER AND THE ANSWERS THERETO

Question 1. With your increased budget, would it be a good idea to reinstitute the computerized data base on travel information with a toll-free number program, and also include information for the handicapped traveler?

Answer. APA would support such an effort. By including information for the handicapped traveler in a computerized and accessible data base, the Department could greatly enhance their travel and leisure opportunities. Persons without handicaps often are not conscious of how they take "informed travel" for granted. In fact, most citizens can be confident that even without careful planning, they will be assured of accessible accommodations and at least physically unhampered access to rest and recreation facilities. The physically handicapped person has no such assurance. Countless journeys have been delayed, hindered or prevented because facilities were inaccessible. Countless hours can be spent, in a strange city, trying to locate accommodations when reservations have been made at a place inappropriate for handicapped access.

In addition to the assistance a toll-free tourism information service would afford the handicapped traveler, it would also encourage tourism and travel facility managers and personnel to pay attention to issues of access and informed behavior toward persons with handicaps.

Question 2. Do you think it is a good idea to let the market place be the sole decision maker in this matter?

Answer. The market place has a poor track record for ensuring that handicapped persons receive adequate nondiscriminating treatment, and adequate access to air transportation. In the testimony heard before your Subcommittee, there was ample evidence that even with the provisions of Section 404A of the Federal Aviation Act, there is still gross insensitivity displayed towards persons with physical impairments. Indeed, were it not Section 404A, one wonders whether persons with handicaps would be allowed on board airlines at all. The probable refusal of services that might be generated by the lack of any national guidance is a situation we encourage the Senate to avoid by establishing policy in support of equitable treatment for these citizens. For adherence to standards to assure non-discrimination, the market place needs not only federal leadership but also the reality of penalties for noncompliance. We do not see this as an abrogation of individual rights. We feel strongly that the federal government must show its leadership in ensuring the civil rights of all its citizens, including those with physical disabilities in these areas, as in any area where the material and social well being of the nation's citizens are involved.

Tourism and transportation industries could include in their routine personnel training package modules addressed to ways of working with persons who have physical impairments. Such training could easily be incorporated in a way that would not impose undue financial hardship on the industries involved. Enormous psychological harm results from inappropriate responses to the needs of persons with physical disabilities. Taking steps to support and guide the development of realistic and sensitive behaviors toward them would promote the well being of the disabled person as well as the society at large.

In addition to the need for standards to ensure equitable treatment, persons who have been unfairly discriminated against must have a mechanism through which to register their grievance and achieve justice. The availability of this recourse rein-

forces the legitimacy of adherence to standards, and assures that attention will be given to noncompliance.

Question 3. Would it be helpful if the Committee were to urge the United States Travel and Tourism Administration to work with associations such as the American Psychological Association to address the psycho-social aspects of tourism and travel?

Answer. The American Psychological Association would be delighted to work with TTA or other agencies on a number of initiatives in this area. The priority that readily comes to mind would be to develop a training package to use with travel and tourism industry representatives that would educate employees on how to interact with the handicapped person so they can travel in comfort and dignity. The package could, for instance, include a videotape presentation and be accompanied by a booklet that would guide trainers in the discussion and practice of appropriate behaviors. An evaluation mechanism could be included that would check the effectiveness of such a program and allow for constructive revision. APA, through its Office of Social and Ethical Responsibility, currently engages in such a training program for hotel staff at sites where its annual convention is held. Working together with TTA representatives, representatives from handicap groups, disabled psychologists and video experts, and given adequate funding, a product beneficial to handicapped individuals and the tourism industry could be developed. We would be happy to provide further details. An oversight committee of TTA representatives, and representatives from handicapped groups such as the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped, in addition to participating psychologists could monitor the development of this project. We believe that there are adequate resources within the D.C. Metropolitan area to initiate a trial version of this kind of effort. Given adequate funding there could also be provision made for dissemination of the training package to state level groups and agencies.

Senator PRESSLER. I might say that Jean Murphy from Sioux Falls, SD, will also have testimony for the hearing to be submitted later. Other statements from both industry and the handicapped organizations will be included in the record.

This concludes the hearing, unless there is further business. I want to thank those who have patiently waited. I think that this has been a very productive hearing, and I shall use the results before various agencies and committees, and private industry in a variety of ways, and determine in my own mind whether or not we need to pursue legislation.

I think that the commitment made by Dan McKinnon was very significant. He will contact the airlines. We will continue to contact the various other travel and tourism groups, and we will work on the sensitivity aspect of this first. Indeed, we will learn as we go.

Some individuals will also be submitting letters, and other statements to this committee which will be made a part of the record. So the record will remain open for 10 days, if that is agreeable.

I thank you very much.

[Whereupon, at 5:18 p.m., the subcommittee adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL ARTICLES, LETTERS, AND STATEMENTS

STATEMENT OF JEAN K. ELDER, PH.D., COMMISSIONER, ADMINISTRATION ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES, DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to discuss the issue of travel for the handicapped.

As Commissioner of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities, Department of Health and Human Services, I am committed to improving the quality of life for our Nation's citizens who are developmentally disabled. As part of this commitment, I am serving as a member of the Travel for Tomorrow Council to promote the enhancement of individual mobility.

When Congress set out to help developmentally disabled people in 1963 through the Mental Retardation Facilities Construction Act (P.L. 88-164), it was providing for one of the most vulnerable groups. We estimate that there are 3.9 million developmentally disabled persons in the United States. Of these, approximately two million are over the age of 18.

Developmental disabilities are defined as severe, chronic disabilities attributed to mental or physical impairments manifested before age 22, which cause substantial limitations in at least three areas of major life activity, and result in the need for services over an extend period of time. Possible limitations may occur in the areas of self care, receptive and expressive language, learning, mobility, self-direction, capacity for independent living and economic independence.

The goal of increased independence for disabled persons was declared this past November by President Reagan through the National Decade of Disabled Persons Proclamation. A person's life can be defined in part by the number of environments in which the activities of daily life take place. Therefore, the ability to travel broadens a person's goals in life and increases the ability to cope with life's situations whether they are in a social setting or at the work place.

Successful mobility is fundamental to rehabilitation, education and independent living. The Administration on Developmental Disabilities is supporting this goal for the developmentally disabled through a variety of activities. For example, through our discretionary grants program we have made an award to the University of Wisconsin to disseminate and facilitate the utilization of newly developed orienteering materials and mobility activities for developmentally disabled individuals. Orienteering, a recreational sport, involves the use of a map and compass to determine the position, course, and distance of travel between checkpoints on an unfamiliar course. The adaption of orienteering to problems experienced by the developmentally disabled will assist them in developing independent living and mobility skills.

In addition, the Administration on Developmental Disabilities has launched an initiative on employment to promote the goal of increased independence. Through this effort we have discovered that the tourism industry has and continues to be a major employer of developmentally disabled persons. For example, the National Restaurant Association has an ongoing program to hire developmentally disabled individuals and such food chains as McDonalds and Naugles are also committed to this cause. The hotels and motels in this country are hiring developmentally disabled persons, for example, Marriott, Hyatt and the Brock Hotel Corporation.

Along with this progress in employment, the tourism industry has become increasingly aware and responsive to meeting the travel needs of handicapped citizens. Increasing number of handicapped citizens participate in a full range of life experiences, including travel related to business obligations, transportation within a community, and travel for pleasure. Continued cooperative efforts involving the private sector and government will ensure that the travel needs of handicapped citizens will be identified and met.

In closing, I want to assure you that the policies of the Administration on Developmental Disabilities have and will continue to focus on welcoming the developmentally disabled citizenry into the full life of the community: maximizing immersion into the mainstream.

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STATEMENT OF RICHARD KRODT, PRESIDENT, AMERICAN SOCIETY OF TRAVEL AGENTS, INC.

As President of the American Society of Travel Agents, Inc. [ASTA], I am grateful to have the opportunity to submit this statement before the Senate Subcommittee on Business, Trade and Tourism on behalf of nearly 20,000 members of ASTA. In over 50 years of service to the consumer, ASTA has grown into the largest travel and tourism organization in the world. Since 1931, ASTA has been dedicated to safeguarding the rights of the travelling public and promoting strict standards of professional behavior for the travel industry.

ASTA is testifying on behalf of the handicapped traveller as we recognize that for persons who have any type of serious physical or sensory handicap, travel can be a difficult and sometimes impossible experience. The lack of appropriate facilities and trained personnel can create hardships for the most determined person with a disability.

Over the years, remarkable progress has been made by the various components of the travel and tourism industry to facilitate the needs of the handicapped traveller. In the quest for an environment that is free from physical barriers, Congress has been instrumental in easing the mobility of the handicapped. Since 1968, a series of laws have been enacted to assist the handicapped community which is now estimated to be over 35 million in the United States. These laws have not only promoted hiring and participation of the handicapped but made it mandatory that aircrafts, facilities and vehicles be accessible to the handicapped individual. Quite naturally, these strides would encourage travelling for this group of people, which has an estimated market potential of over $30 million annually.

Despite the advancement in the tourism and travel industry for the handicapped, ASTA recognizes the need to improve the quality and accessibility of travel for those with mobility problems. There is much needed to progress to the point of comfort for many handicapped travelers. Routine availability of wheelchairs, accessible restrooms on busses and trains and menus in braille are but a few of the issues ASTA encourages more progress in. Most definitely, consulting with a handicapped person in the primary stages of design in all aspects of the travel industry should be considered a matter of course for a more integrated perspective on the special needs of this group. The Society has called upon all segments of the travel and tourism industry to be informed and trained to assist the handicapped traveller.

ASTA has pledged to assist travel agents and industry suppliers in the efforts to improve travel for the handicapped. Contributions to "ASTA Notes", with a circulation of 22,000, will be made to publicize promotional activities and issues for the handicapped. ASTA has adopted a pamphlet that addresses the concerns for a handicapped traveller and gives constructive hints for easing this pursuit.

As reciprocal members of the Society for the Advancement of Travel for the Handicapped (SATH), ASTA supports the objectives of that organization. In conjunction with SATH and many other interested parties, ASTA requests that opportunities for the handicapped be a basic part of national tourism policy.

STATEMENT OF GORDON H. MANSFIELD, NATIONAL ADVOCACY DIRECTOR, PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA

Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Subcommittee, it is a pleasure for Paralyzed Veterans of America to present the views and concerns of its members regarding transportation problems for the handicapped.

PVA is a congressionally chartered veterans' service organization with over 11,000 members, all of whom have served in the United States Armed Forces and have incurred spinal cord injury or dysfunction, both service-connected and non-service-connected in origin. All of PVA's members are handicapped within the meaning of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

PVA has historically addressed the issues of accessibility and maximum independence for our members and all disabled citizens. We are particularly pleased that this hearing is being conducted: transportation is one of the paramount aspects of an accessible, integrated society. Because of this fact, PVA has, for many years, been actively involved in addressing the transportation needs of America's disabled citizens.

It has been the experience of PVA that this nation has been slow in responding to the accessibility requirements of the nation's disabled citizens. This has been true in the removal of barriers, both architectural and attitudinal. During the past decade, however, there has been an increasing awareness of these needs. This awareness

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has, unfortunately, been sporadic and piecemeal, with attention being frequently directed at isolated or local problems and situations.

In our efforts to ensure that adequate and equitable travel resources are available to disabled individuals, PVA has worked with a wide range of organizations and agencies, both private and governmental. In all these actions, PVA has consistently stressed the need for a comprehansive, integrated approach in addressing the needs of the disabled traveler. Travel, particularly inter-city travel, if inaccessible, can pose a serious hindrance to the disabled traveler, if not preclude travel altogether.

During the past year PVA has attended conferences conducted by the Department of Commerce, Division of Tourism; has met with the Air Transport Association; and has continued as an active participant in the Access to the Skies program conducted by Rehabilitation International U.S.A. In all these instances, specific aspects of travel for disabled individuals have been addressed, and several conclusions have become evident.

The first factor which is most evident for any disabled traveler is the lack of continuity in available services. The disabled traveler is continually faced with unexpected obstacles. Examples of such obstacles are so numerous as to be the norm. A few specific incidents will illuminate this situation.

A disabled traveler going from Washington, D.C., to New York City decides to utilize the Amtrak system. The train is boarded at Union Station in Washington and is most accessible, since Amtrak has taken very positive actions in equipping their rail fleet to meet the requirements of disabled travelers. The trip is uneventful, because Amtrak has provided special cars with wide aisles, accessible restroom facilities, seating which provides for ease of ingress and egress of the disabled passenger, and has personnel which have an understanding of the needs of the traveler.

Upon arrival at Pennsylvania Station in New York, the traveler leaves the train only to find that he is below street level and with no suitable facilities for reaching the street. The traveler has two options; first there is an escalator which is totally unsafe, at best, or impossible to use. The second option is to find a station attendant who has a key to the one elevator which is used primarily for the removal of garbage and trash, and thereby reach the street level. Unfortunately, problems similar to this specific example occur every day throughout the country.

A second example of the lack of continuity or uniformity regards air travel. The disabled traveler has, generally, learned from experience that it is prudent to contact the air carrier prior to departure and notify them that the traveler has a disabling condition. This is due in part to the diversity of requirements and procedures established by individual air carriers. The disabled traveler, upon arrival at the airport, finds that despite his previous contact with the carrier, the procedures are interpreted differently by the personnel working at the time. The traveler then must undergo changes in plans, acrimonious discussions, or accept demeaning treatment. This situation can be exacerbated when differing interpretations are made from airport to airport by the same carrier, or even person to person within the same airport.

PVA is greatly concerned that with the sunsetting of CAB regulations; we fear that what little enforcement authority now exists will completely disappear. The potential situation is analogous to that which recently occurred regarding telecommunications. In the haste of deciding diverstiture requirements on the Bell Telephone System, the judicial system overlooked the provision of service to handicapped consumers. Also, Congress, despite passage of the Telecommunications for the Disabled Act, was unable to foresee the regulatory wasteland where no effective remedy is available. The Federal Communications Commission has been tasked with creating regulations which would obligate the American Telephone and Telegraph company, and the operating companies, to provide services which they have been unable to fulfill. This impasse exists because the needs of the disabled were not considered prior to divestiture.

PVA believes this Subcommittee has the opportunity to examine the situation as regards airline travel by handicapped individuals, and to provide legislation for specific enforcement by a designated agency which has the proper authority and capability. We are specifically concerned that enforcement of appropriate regulations be placed within one designated agency. The uncertainty of what parts of CAB Section 404 would be placed in which agency upon sunsetting of the CAB is of paramount concern.

PVA believes the Congress should examine the alteratives available for sure and knowledgeable enforcement of regulations providing for equal access to air travel by handicapped individuals. PVA would support congressional direction to designate the Architectural and Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (A&TBCB) as the federal agency responsible for enforcing existing Civil Aeronautics Board Section

404 consumer protection regulations. The A&TBCB has a structure for, and knowledgeable personnel to, deal with issues of concern to handicapped individuals. The A&TBCB has been dealing with structural barriers to the full integration of handicapped persons for some time. PVA believes that the A&TBCB, with appropriate congressional authority, and adequate staffing and funding would have the capability of dealing with the valid complaints of handicapped airline travelers.

PVA urges this Subcommittee to make a determination of the need, and to ensure that a specific agency is designated to enforce equal access to air travel for handicapped individuals. This agency should have clear responsibility and sufficient authority to carry out a well-defined mission.

In addition to transportation problems, there is a second factor which confronts any disabled traveler: upon arrival at his destination, the disabled traveler faces limited available accomodations, dining opportunities, and recreational facilities. While these are part of the large problem of architectural barriers in society, they pose a special limitation for options available to the disabled traveler. PVA recognizes that the government cannot mandate accessibility in the private sector; however, we believe that it should be encouraged.

The establishment of uniformity in travel procedures, and the removal of physical barriers, will greatly enhance the ease of movement for all disabled individuals. Of particular importance are the implications of such actions for the disabled business traveler. The disabled business traveler frequently lacks the time needed for planning his trip far in advance.

As more and more disabled individuals enter the work force in jobs of responsibility and independence, the requirements for uniformly accessible transportation and facilities increase. The very livelihood of the disabled worker may depend on adequate transportation. Like any other business person, the disabled business traveler must have access to a readily usable network of transportation services. It is PVA's firm conviction that the needs of the disabled business traveler, as well as the disabled tourist, must be met if this nation is to be truly accessible.

One are that we desire to address in this statement is the adequacy of existing federal laws and policies. In this regard, PVA would like to comment on one specific action which is needed to provide improved accessibility in the private sector. Until December 31, 1982, there existed in the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 a provision (Section 190) which provided a tax deduction for the removal of architectural barriers in privately-owned, publicly-used places of commerce, employment, and recreation. As noted this provision was allowed to expire over a year ago.

There are presently pending several legislative proposals which would reinstate Section 190, but none has received enthusiastic treatment by the revenue committees. Except for a few provisions addressing the needs of the blind, Section 190 was the only statement in the Tax Code which directly benefitted the handicapped. PVA finds it difficult to understand why Congress has allowed this provision to remain inactive for nearly a year and a half.

PVA realizes that this Subcommittee is addressing the needs of disabled travelers, and it is the Senate Committee on Finance which addresses changes in the Tax Code. However, the needs of disabled individuals who travel would be greatly served if the private sector had inducements for making facilities accessible. In this regard we request that Members of this Subcommittee encourage and support efforts by their colleagues in securing reinstatement of Section 190. Such action will benefit disabled travelers and millions of other Americans, by providing incentives for the creation of a barrier free society.

The establishment of unformity in travel procedures and the removal of physical barriers will greatly enhance the ease of movement for all disabled individuals: of particular importance are the implications of such actions for the disabled business traveler. For the occasional disabled tourist, travel entails considerable time being used to ensure the availability of accessible facilities and plans—the disabled business traveler generally lacks the luxury of extra time to plan this far in advance.

Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the members of Paralyzed Veterans of America and all disabled citizens we welcome this opportunity to comment. It is essential that the problems of the disabled traveler be addressed and hearings such as this greatly assist in focusing attention on this multifaceted issue. Hopefully, this will be the beginning of efforts to create a uniform, comprehensive approach to the needs of disabled individuals.

Again, thank you, and this concludes my statement.

STATEMENT OF R. A. RANKING, JR., VICE PRESIDENT-CORPORATE RELATIONS, MARRIOTT CORP.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony, regarding travel by handicapped persons, to the Subcommittee on Business, Travel and Tourism. I am testifying on behalf of Marriott Corporation and the American Hotel & Motel Association (AHMA), of which Marriott is a long-time member.

Marriott Corporation is a Washington, D.C.—based company involved in a range of lodging, food service and entertainment businesses. The company has operations and franchises in 49 states and 25 countries, annual sales of over $3 billion, and over 109,000 employees. The Marriott hotel system includes 133 hotels, resorts and franchised inns totaling over 57,000 rooms.

The American Hotel & Motel Association is a federation of hotel and motel associations located in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Its membership includes more than 8,500 hotels and motels that account for over one million rentable rooms. All of the major hotel and motel chains are included in AHMA's membership.

Historically, the AHMA has been involved in accessibility of public facilities for the handicapped through its participation as a member of the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) A117.1 Committee. This committee was responsible for development of published specifications for making buildings and facilities accessible to and usable by the physically handicapped, and has continued to conduct an ongoing review of related matters.

ANSI A117.1, the national voluntary consensus standard for accessibility, pertains to the following types of construction:

Design and construction of new building and facilities—including rooms, spaces, public walks and site improvements;

Remodeling, alteration and rehabilitation of existing construction; and

Resolution of related permanent, temporary and emergency conditions.

There are many examples throughout the lodging industry of modifications which have been made to public space and guest rooms to accommodate handicapped persons. While the AHMA opposes federal regulation of the lodging industry, it makes every effort to educate its members regarding the needs of the handicapped, encouraging them to comply with accessibility standards on a voluntary basis, and to provide for handicapped guests.

Several of the major lodging chains—including the company I represent, Marriott Corporation—have accessibility criteria which they have developed internally for their own operations. They have made concerted efforts to make their employees aware of the needs of the handicapped, and have tried to give the handicapped traveler information on what can be expected at the various properties of these chains.

Marriott illustrates the kind of commitment which has been made to accommodate the handicapped traveler. Our Hotel Group has been providing facilities for the handicapped for over 15 years—well before public consciousness was raised on this issue. Through the company's Architecture and Construction Division, which designs many hotels internally, and coordinates design and construction for all Marriott hotels, the company has used consumer feedback and operating experience in an evoluntary process to improve the accessibility of its facilities.

Obviously, all new hotels are subject to current applicable codes regarding accessibility. However, the company also is engaged in a continuous program of upgrading existing facilities, which generally permits Marriott to retrofit older hotels to current standards. Our objective is to provide the most usable hotel product for all.

Our Hotel Design Guide, produced and administered by the Architecture and Construction Division, contains detailed specifications and criteria by which the company and any outside owners and designers abide.

The underlying philosophy in the design of any Marriott hotel is one of common sense and basic operational planning. These considerations parallel the needs of the handicapped guest.

For example, floor level changes—whether in public or service areas of the hotel—are equally prohibitive to the user. Rolling service carts cannot negotiate steps any better than a handicapped guest in a wheelchair, or a guest with any other mobility impairment.

Our lodging facilities have accessibility features in all areas which the public must use, starting with the parking lot and continuing through the hotel public spaces to the guest rooms themselves. These features include:

Parking and entrances.—All parking facilities are planned to enable the handicapped traveler to park at a location convenient to the main entrance and any other necessary access points such as those found in low-rise guest room wings. Sidewalk

ramps are incorporated in the main entrance to the hotel, and the entrance driveway and sidewalk are at the same plane—which enables the guest, as well as the bell person with a luggage cart, to enter the building with a minimum of obstacles and effort.

Restaurants and lounges.—Restaurants and cocktail lounges in our hotels represent design challenges—they need to provide an exciting atmosphere while retaining appropriate accessibility. Generally, our family or all-purpose restaurants do not have extensive level changes, because they are service facilities used by guests when quick delivery of breakfast and lunch service is desired. In our specialty restaurants and cocktail lounges, where level changes may be used by designers to contribute to the ambiance, a substantial portion of the facility is accessible. For ease of movement within these spaces, casters are generally used on chairs.

Meeting facilities.—The nature of the use of exhibition halls, ballrooms and meeting rooms dictates an absence of level changes. Such changes would post major obstacles to serving food from rolling carts, and would impede movement of groups viewing exhibits because their attention would be focused on the exhibit subjects, not on where they were moving. Door pulls, not knobs, are standard features for this kind of space.

Elevators and corridors.—Our elevators comply with the ANSI standards, which require Braille symbols and controls accessible to a seated person. In many cases, the design of the corridor room numbers uses the raised letter type which assists the visually impaired to identify the number. Access to public restrooms typically is through a series of buffer walls rather than doors.

Accessible guest rooms.—Marriott's general design philosophy is that the appearance of "fully accessible" guest rooms should be similar to that of our "standard" guest rooms. We prefer a residential look throughout, but each fully accessible guest room contains subtle features, and room layout is modified somewhat to provide adequate space for wheelchair movement. Generally, these accessible rooms are located within the hotel at locations convenient to the ground floor, elevators and public space.

Based on historical use and consumer feedback over a number of years, Marriott believes that designing one percent of the total guest rooms in each hotel to be fully accessible generally is more than adequate to accommodate the demand for these facilities by handicapped persons. Therefore, this has been adopted in standard criteria for Marriott hotels. However, where local code requirements are higher, or where specific conditions warrant—such as for a new hotel to be located near a hospital—then this level will be exceeded.

We have developed standard criteria for a fully accessible room, including the guest bathroom arrangements and features recommended by the National Center for a Barrier Free Environment (a Washington, D.C.-based clearinghouse of technical information on accessibility with which Marriott has been involved since 1981).

Door width at both guest room and bath entrances is 34 inches (36 inches in California). There is a grab or assist bar at each bathtub and at the water closet. The shower head is the moveable type with a flexible hose. A robe hook and towel rack are mounted at heights reachable from a seated position. The height of the lavatory counter allows a person in a wheelchair to fit his knees under it, and piping is covered or insulated to prevent injury. A special "shelter arms" assist bar for the water closet is available and installed on request. All switches are accessible to a seated person, and door viewers are located at two heights.

The hardware on the guest room door is the lever type, which is easier to operate than a knob. Also, these guest rooms are equipped with a three-way switch at the bed which controls the entry hall light, and sometimes remote control of the television is provided. Also, closet doors are eliminated in fully accessible rooms to provide easy access to hangers and the closet rack which is at a lower height. Newly incorporated features include a telephone in the bath area, reachable from a seated position.

Standard guest rooms.—In the fall of 1983, Marriott reviewed its design specifications for standard guest rooms, and made two changes which enhance the use of these rooms by guests with certain handicaps when fully accessible rooms are not available. The width of the bathroom door was enlarged to 30 inches to accommodate the average wheel-chair. A grab bar was added to the standard features of the bath area, to be installed vertically within the tub area on the shower head wall. This bar will be located between the shower head and outside edge of the tub to assist the user in movement, and to support both seated and standing positions.

These changes are being made in hotels now in design stages which are scheduled for completion in late 1985 and beyond. Also, many of Marriott's existing hotels are incorporating the grab bar feature as a retrofit installation.

Employee training.—Providing accessible facilities for handicapped travelers obviously is more than a matter of design specifications. It is important that hotel employees be trained in how to best serve the handicapped traveler, including thorough familiarization with the services and facilities available, and sensitivity to the traveler's needs.

Each Marriott-operated hotel has written procedures outlining the services and facilities available to the handicapped. These are discussed in the training of hotel employees, and adherence to these procedures is audited periodically by operations management. If there are any problems, guests may provide feedback to management. If there are any problems, guests may provide feedback to management on consumer survey forms located in each room, which are sent to our corporate headquarters and given quick response.

We believe that providing and maintaining accessible public facilities is a process of constant improvement. There is a much larger body of technical knowledge about accessibility than there was even five years ago, due to the efforts of organizations such as the National Center for a Barrier Free Environment. New equipment and methods continually are being developed and brought to the marketplace.

Recently, Marriott has worked with the AHMA and the National Center for a Barrier Free Environment to initiate a program for AHMA members in cooperation with AHMA's technical committee of executive engineers. This program will develop training materials for both engineering and operating management of the 8,500 hotels and motels across the nation, to better equip them to deal with accessibility problems and to encourage them to voluntarily adopt ANSI standard A117.1.

We are well aware of the dimensions of the challenge to make travel easier for handicapped people. Accessibility is not just a problem for people with permanent disabilities. Those with temporaty disabilities caused by illness or injury, and those who face diminishment of physical capabilities due to old age, also are affected by this issue. Together, these three segments involve nearly one-third of America's total population.

While there certainly are marketing aspects to the solution of this problem, we regard the question as one of accommodation rather than marketing. We believe significant progress has been made by the lodging industry troward providing greater accessibility for all people. This has been accomplished in good faith on a reasonable, voluntary basis.

With continued voluntary cooperation between the public and private sector, we believe these efforts to improve accesibility in the lodging industry will contine to be fruitful. Therefore, we seen no need for related regulation at the Federal level which could prove cumbersome and counterproductive.

PARALYZED VETERANS OF AMERICA, INC.,
Sioux Falls, SD, June 14, 1984.

Senator LARRY PRESSLER,
Senate Russell Building,
Washington, DC.

DEAR SENATOR PRESSLER: The North Central Chapter, because of its geographic location has membership in five states. These are Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota and South Dakota.

Our membership consists of veterans who have incurred spinal column injury or disfunction, both service connected and non-service connected in origin. We also have an associate membership which consists of individuals who are not veterans however, are handicapped within the meaning of Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended.

North Central Chapter has historically addressed the issues of accessibility and maximum independence for our members and all disabled citizens. We are particularly pleased that this hearing is being conducted: Transportation is one of the paramount aspects of an accessible, integrated society. Because of this fact, North Central Chapter, has, for many years, been actively involved in addressing the transportation needs of America's disabled citizens.

It has been the experience of North Central Chapter that this nation has been slow in responding to the accessibility requirements of the nation's disabled citizens. This has been true in the removal of barriers, both architectural and attitudinal. During the past decade, however, there has been an increasing awareness of these needs. This awareness has, unfortunately, been sporadic and piecemeal, with attention being frequently directed at isolated or local problems and situations.

In our efforts to ensure that adequate and equitable travel resources are available to disabled individuals, P.V.A. has worked with a wide range of organizations and

agencies, both private and governmental. In all these actions, P.V.A. has consistently stressed the need for a comprehensive, integrated approach in addressing the needs of the disabled traveler. Travel, both inter-state and intra-state, if inaccessible, can pose a serious hindrance to the disabled traveler, if not preclude travel altogether.

This is particularly true in the rural areas of this great nation. Many disabled people in rural America have given up the battle and left their small town communities and moved into larger cities where their transportation needs can be met.

In the area of airline travel, the deregulation of the airlines in rural America was a major set-back to accessible air transportation. A prime example of this was a situation that developed in South Dakota:

The City of Sioux Falls is the largest city in South Dakota and Pierre is the State Capitol. Prior to deregulation, a handicapped person could board a major airlines in Sioux Falls and travel to Pierre. Following deregulation a person in a wheelchair could not even get in the airplane of the small commuter airline that now serves this route. This is not an isolated situation, but is quite common throughout the Midwest.

The interstate bus system is totally inaccessible to the handicapped. Some of the major bus lines have extended the opportunity for attendants traveling with handicapped people to travel at no fare. This is very generous and I commend the bus lines for the consideration. However, this does not do the wheelchair bound traveler much good. The reason is that the only way a person in a wheelchair can board a bus is to be carried on. This is totally unacceptable for two reasons: (A) the individual being carried can be severely injured and (B) the individuals doing the carrying can be severely injured.

On a local level most small towns in rural America do not have any form of wheelchair accessible rural transportation. This also includes the community's education system.

From the above examples I hope that it will help you to better understand the plight of the disabled in rural America and in essence the non-existence of any useable public transportation by the disabled.

In order to correct these inequities in the area of transportation I feel we need uniform regulations which apply to all. In addition to this we need a uniform enforcement procedure to be administered by one agency. The A&TBCB now has this authority in dealing with structural barriers to the full integration of handicapped persons.

Sincerely,

DARRELL E. JEPSON, *President.*

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